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The New
REPUBLIC
A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LXXXXI NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30, 1937 NUMBER 1178

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The Week

IN THE steel war, events trod on one another's heels during the week ending June 21. The companies brought to nothing the persistent attempts of Governor Davey of Ohio to mediate and continued their efforts to open plants and enlarge production. While the La Follette committee investigated violations of civil liberties, and further violence was threatened, an able Federal Mediation Board was appointed. The employers refused the request of this board to maintain the status quo during attempts to settle the strike. They also declined to discuss the question not only of a written agreement with the union, but also of an oral agreement. To prevent violence, Governor Earle of Pennsylvania declared martial law in Johnstown and closed the Bethlehem plant there, and Governor Davey established martial law in Youngstown and ordered maintenance of the status quo. The President requested the companies not to try to open their plants. The National Labor Relations Board then began hearings on the charge that Inland Steel, by refusing to sign a contract, was violating the Wagner Labor Relations Act. . . . In Congress, a move sponsored by prominent Democrats to force local governments to put up at least 25 percent of relief costs as a condition of WPA grants was defeated. . . . Many Democratic Congressmen were reluctant to attend the party parley to which the President invited them. . . . In its first test in a federal court, the sit-down was declared illegal, and the Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia ordered members of the American Federation of Hosiery Workers to vacate the mill of the Apex Hosiery Company. The union announced that it would carry the fight to the Supreme Court.

THE week abroad looked like one of Nazi and fascist advance. . . . The Blum government fell in France because the Senate refused to give it power to deal with the financial situation; Chautemps, a Radical Socialist (which means that he belongs to the most conservative party in the People's Front) tried to form a Cabinet with support of the Socialists and Communists, but the financial future remained uncertain. Any internal weakness of course gives Germany and Italy a chance to be more firm. . . . To French weakness was added a marked decline in Soviet prestige on account of the execution of eight generals of the Red Army and greatly increased doubt of the stability of the regime. . . . Bilbao fell to Franco and it was rumored he would ask Britain for recognition as a belligerent. The German government reported a loyalist submarine attack on the cruiser "Leipzig" and pressed for severe action against the Spanish government, while the British were aroused over the evidences of non-neutrality by Italy and Germany in the Basque campaign. . . . Reports that the British government would now push through a four-power western European understanding to replace Locarno, excluding Russia, were sharply reversed by the sudden cancellation of von Neurath's projected visit to London and a stiffening of the German attitude toward Spain. Great Britain even uttered a veiled threat to abandon Spanish neutrality unless the agreement were observed. . . . Within Germany Hitler pursued his fight with the Catholics by secularizing Catholic schools in Bavaria.

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CLOSING of the Catholic schools in Bavaria is probably best interpreted as an incident in a larger war now being carried on by the Nazis. On June 20 Adolph Wagner, Bavarian Minister of the Interior, announced the closing of 11 private Catholic schools and the secularization of 966 parochial schools. Hitler places great reliance on the training of youth to safeguard and maintain his program, and to that end he has flooded all the public schools of Germany with Nazi propaganda. One result has been that parents in large numbers have sent their children to religious schools in order to escape—or at least to minimize—the Nazi outpourings. Hitler now invades this last area of scholastic independence and is using highly publicized immorality trials and a general anti-clerical campaign as his excuses.

WHATEVER faint hope still existed of naval-armament limitation by the great powers in the near future was completely shattered by Japan's firm negative to the question from Washington as to whether she was willing to join the other naval powers in undertaking not to mount larger than fourteen-inch guns on new ships. Previously Great Britain had asked the same question and received the same answer. She is more anxious than the United States to limit capital-ship construction to small, light battleships, because there are so many strategically placed naval bases in the Empire. The United States, on the other hand, has comparatively few stations for rest and refueling and logically would prefer larger ships with greater cruising radii. But no matter. Japan has refused to consider any qualitative limitation and the naval-building struggle will continue, no holds barred, until that magical day in the future when the race has become still less endurable and the rulers of the world decide to get together and behave like human beings.

IT HAS always been a truism of trade-union activity that it is far more difficult to organize white-collar workers than industrial employees. The white-collar man has been inclined to think of himself as a careerist with an excellent chance of "getting to the top," however much the grim facts might prove the contrary. In recent years, however, some important breaches have been made in the dyke. The acting profession was unionized years ago, and we have recently seen the rise of the Newspaper Guild, which has more than doubled its membership in the past year. Almost entirely under CIO auspices, a great drive is now in progress to organize office workers in general. A convention was recently held in Philadelphia by the National Committee for White Collar Organization with twenty-three groups officially represented, including spokesmen for workers in business offices generally, social service, advertising, insurance and publishing. There is now a CIO union among the federal government's employees in Washington. The Newspaper Guild at its recent St. Louis convention decided to take in all other newspaper employees not already covered by separate unions. The Book and Magazine Guild is assuming the status of a genuine union, amalgamating with those members of the Bookkeepers', Stenographers' and Accountants' Union in the publishing field. The combined group will be a local in the (CIO) United Office and Professional Workers of America. White-collar employees are workers just as much as anybody else; if unionism is good for anyone, it is good for them.

OUTLAYS for the Civilian Conservation Corps must be provided by July 1 if the CCC is to continue legally beyond the end of the current fiscal year. In all probability appropriations will be forthcoming and various groups are urging that changes in the administrative machinery be made at the same time. Representative Bernard has introduced a bill to remove the CCC from the control of the army and place it under the jurisdiction of a civilian board. Some observers do not object to the army's directing the details of daily camp routine, but do think that the army's present supervision of the educational program of the camps should be completely and unequivocally removed. Under the existing system the educational program is carried on by civilians who are always under technical and frequently under actual control by the army authorities. The anomalous status of these civilians is indicated by the fact that they are listed as "advisers" rather than directors. There have been instances of censorship of items in camp bulletins and paper, the banning of some courses in citizenship on the grounds of alleged radicalism and refusal to permit civilian employees to consult their civilian superiors on matters on which local army officers already had ruled. The CCC's very nature overemphasizes the military aspect, so the more clearly the educational program is made autonomous, the better all around.

AN INTERESTING attempt to embody in concrete legislative terms the ideas expressed by Dr. Mordecai Ezekiel's book, "$2,500 a Year," has been made by Representative Thomas R. Amlie of Wisconsin. The bill, H.R. 7318, was introduced on June 1 and referred to the House Ways and Means Committee. Under the federal right to regulate interstate commerce the bill would set up an Industrial Expansion Administration. It would be the duty of this authority to survey the country's needs in goods and services, study productive capacity and then draw up a comprehensive schedule in which each major division of industry would enlarge its production to come nearer meeting the country's real needs. Inducement would be provided by a heavy processing tax which would be rebated up to 95 percent if a given industrial unit produced its entire allotted amount. There would also be optional grants, guarantees and purchase agreements for industries undertaking to enlarge production and raise wages without increasing prices. Rights of labor are specifically guaranteed in the bill and higher real wages are a specific objective but no socialization is con-

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templated and private ownership and private profits would remain intact, subject to public regulation. The whole idea is an attempt to apply to industry, and in reverse, the same control that was applied to reduce production in agriculture by the AAA.

WE HAVE always been skeptical of the value of spectacular endurance flights like the one the three Russian fliers, Chekalov, Baidukov and Beliakov, have recently completed. If, as has been stated in the newspaper accounts, their 5,288-mile hop has proven anything about the feasibility of the North Pole route for regular inter-continental passenger service, it was probably worth the risk involved. To us it seems unlikely, however, that a trip from Moscow to Vancouver in a single-engined plane, loaded to its utmost capacity with gasoline, and following a rather irregular course, can have proved anything of the sort. Nevertheless the flight was a thrilling feat, especially because so much of it was over frozen waste where mechanical or human failure would have meant almost certain death. If the flight contributed nothing to the advance of aviation, it did prove the daring and competence of these aviators.

THE League for Industrial Democracy has adopted a campaign of ten points against the forces at war with farm, labor and consumer organizations. The League's objectives are: a guarantee by the federal government of employment for all employables; producer-consumer coördination in agriculture and general improvement of the farmer's condition; public ownership of natural resources and utilities; increased income and inheritance taxes; nationalization of banking; reduction of armament and government ownership of arms and munitions factories; equal political, civil and economic rights for all residents of the United States; non-recognition of the right of any court to invalidate an act of Congress; passage of the child-labor amendment and support of federal aid to needy youth and support of a national insurance scheme. In addition, the LID is planning a national conference of farm, labor and consumer groups within the next six months.

ANYBODY who walks one block in any American town or city is likely to discover for himself the newest fad. All the sweet young things have taken to wearing dark glasses, preferably with white rims. The explanation is that the movie stars of Hollywood disguise themselves this way, to avoid being torn into souvenirs by their loving fans. Ergo, if you wear colored spectacles, you may be a movie star yourself. It might seem faintly improbable that two hundred Hollywood stars would turn up on any given Wednesday noon outside the Keokuk High School. It might also seem regrettable that several million young women should strain their eyes by wearing dark glasses needlessly. But women in the past have done things far more unhealthy and illogical than this, for the sake of fashion. And they will again.

The Girdlers Choose War

THE RECORD proves clearly that Mr. Tom Girdler and his steel allies want war—war to the finish, no matter what the cost in killed and wounded, in social unrest or in money. Here are the main decisions proving their anti-social ruthlessness.

1. They invited the strike by refusing to sign a contract similar to that which had already been signed by U. S. Steel and many other steel companies, employing in all 440,000 men.

2. They armed their plants, enlisted the aid of police, deputy sheriffs and vigilantes, and sought conflict with strike pickets and demonstrators. This conflict has so far resulted in twelve killed and many wounded.

3. When the Secretary of Labor appointed a Federal Mediation Board consisting of such able and distinguished men as Mr. Charles P. Taft 2nd, Mr. Lloyd K. Garrison and Mr. Edward F. McGrady, the employers refused to accede to the request of this board that the status quo be maintained during the attempt to mediate, but instead went ahead with plans to open plants and stimulate a "back to work movement." The first result was a riot in Youngstown, in which two strikers were killed and others were injured. Among those wounded was Mrs. Mary Heaton Vorse, long a contributor to The New Republic, who was present as our correspondent. Not satisfied with this bloodshed, the steel employers prepared to renew the struggle.

4. In conference with the mediators, the employers declined to enter into any agreement, whether oral or written, with the steel union or the CIO. This, of course, is the issue of the strike. "Any discussion of this subject," said Mr. Girdler, "is futile." The only use Mr. Girdler has for government is as a protection of his attempt to operate the mills in defiance of both the strike and the legal obligation to engage in collective bargaining in good faith.

In Johnstown, Pennsylvania, where a strike was effective against the Cambria plant of Bethlehem Steel, the mayor, who once was in jail on a liquor charge, was acting as an ally of the company in leading a "back to work movement." Police had clashed with strikers. Serious violence was imminent. In view of these facts Governor Earle declared martial law, sent in state police to take over the duties from local authorities, and ordered the mill closed. Governor Davey of Ohio also declared martial law in Youngstown and ordered maintenance of the status quo. At the same time President Roosevelt added his personal request to the employers not to foment violence by trying to open the Youngstown plants.

The kind of result that may be expected from the policy of Mr. Girdler and his allies is vividly described in the accompanying account, reprinted by permission from The St. Louis Post Dispatch, of a film depicting the Memorial Day massacre at South Chicago. It seems to us impossible to read this account and then fail to support the efforts of state

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and federal governments to stop the war that Mr. Girdler insists on fighting.

Washington, June 16 (Post-Dispatch Bureau).—Five agents of the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee, headed by Robert Wohlforth, the Committee's secretary, arrived in Chicago yesterday to begin an investigation of the tragic events of Memorial Day, when nine persons were killed or fatally wounded by city police in smashing an attempt by steel-strike demonstrators to march past the Republic Steel company plant in South Chicago. Appearance of the Committee's agents on the scene coincided with the death of the ninth victim, a seventeen-year-old boy reported to have joined the pickets in the hope of getting a job in the mill after settlement of the strike. It was learned today that the Committee's decision to proceed with the inquiry was hastened by the private showing here last week of a suppressed newsreel in which the police attack on the demonstrators is graphically recorded. The Committee obtained possession of the film in New York, after its maker, the Paramount company, had announced that it would not be exhibited publicly for fear of inciting riots throughout the country.

The showing of the film here was conducted with the utmost secrecy. The audience was limited to little more than Senators La Follette, Progressive, Wisconsin, and Thomas, Democrat, Utah, who compose the Committee, and members of the staff.

Those who saw it were shocked and amazed by scenes showing scores of uniformed policemen firing their revolvers point-blank into a dense crowd of men, women and children and then pursuing and clubbing the survivors unmercifully as they made frantic efforts to escape.

The impression produced by these fearful scenes was heightened by the sound record which accompanied the picture, reproducing the roar of police fire and the screams of the victims. It was run off several times for the scrutiny of the investigators, and at each showing they detected additional instances of "frightfulness." It is expected to be of extraordinary value in identifying individual policemen and their victims. The film itself is an outstanding example of camera reporting under difficult conditions.

The following description of the picture comes from a person who saw it several times and had a particular interest in studying it closely for detail. Its accuracy is beyond question.

The first scenes show police drawn up in a long line across a dirt road which runs diagonally through a large open field, then turns into a street which is parallel to, and some 200 yards distant from, the high fence surrounding the Republic mill. The police line extends forty or fifty yards on each side of the dirt road. Behind the line, and in the street beyond, nearer the mill, are several patrol wagons and numerous reserve squads of police.

Straggling across the field, in a long, irregular line, headed by two men carrying American flags, the demonstrators are shown approaching. Many carry placards. They appear to number about 300—approximately the same as the police—although it is known that some 2,000 strike sympathizers were watching the march from a distance.

A vivid close-up shows the head of the parade being halted at the police line. The flag-bearers are in front. Behind them the placards are massed. They bear such devices as: "Come On Out—Help Win the Strike"; "Republic vs. the People" and "C.I.O." Between the flagbearers is the marchers' spokesman, a muscular young man in shirt sleeves with a CIO button on the band of his felt hat.

He is arguing earnestly with the police officer who appears to be in command. His vigorous gestures indicate that he is insisting on permission to continue through the police line, but in the general din of yelling and talking his words cannot be distinguished. His expression is serious, but no suggestion of threat or violence is apparent. The police officer, whose back is to the camera, makes one impatient gesture of refusal, and says something which cannot be understood.

Then suddenly, without apparent warning, there is a terrific roar of pistol shots, and men in the front ranks of the marchers go down like grass before a scythe. The camera catches approximately a dozen falling simultaneously in a heap. The massive, sustained roar of the police pistols lasts perhaps two or three seconds.

Instantly the police charge on the marchers with riot sticks flailing. At the same time tear-gas grenades are seen sailing into the mass of demonstrators, and clouds of gas rise over them. Most of the crowd is now in flight. The only discernible case of resistance is that of a marcher with a placard on a stick which he uses in an attempt to fend off a charging policeman. He is successful only for an instant. Then he goes down under a shower of blows.

The scenes which follow are among the most harrowing of the picture. Although the ground is strewn with dead and wounded, and the mass of the marchers are in precipitate flight down the dirt road and across the field, a number of individuals, either through foolish hardihood, or because they have not yet realized what grim and deadly business is in progress around them, have remained behind, caught in the midst of the charging police.

In a manner which is appallingly businesslike, groups of policemen close in on these isolated individuals and go to work on them with their clubs.

In several instances, from two to four policemen are seen beating one man. One strikes him horizontally across the face, using his club as he would wield a baseball bat. Another crashes it down on top of his head, and still another is whipping him across the back.

These men try to protect their heads with their arms, but it is only a matter of a second or two until they go down. In one such scene, directly in the foreground, a policeman gives the fallen man a final smash on the head before moving on to the next job.

In the front line during the parley with the police is a girl, not more than five feet tall, who can hardly weigh more than 100 pounds. Under one arm she is carrying a purse and some newspapers. After the first deafening volley of shots she turns, to find that her path to flight is blocked by a heap of fallen men. She stumbles over them, apparently dazed.

The scene shifts for a moment, then she is seen going down under a quick blow from a policeman's club, delivered from behind. She gets up, and staggers around. A few moments later, she is shown being shoved into a patrol wagon, blood cascading down her face and spreading over her clothing.

Preceding this episode, however, is a scene which, for sheer horror, outdoes the rest. A husky, middle-

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aged, bareheaded man has found himself caught far behind the rear ranks of the fleeing marchers. Between him and others, policemen are as thick as flies, but he elects to run the gauntlet. Astonishingly agile for one of his age and build, he runs like a deer, leaping a ditch, dodging as he goes. Surprised policemen take hasty swings as he passes them. Some get him on the back, some on the back of the head, but he keeps on his feet and keeps going.

The scene is bursting with a frightful sort of drama. Will he make it? The suspense is almost intolerable to those who watch. It begins to look as if he will get through. But no! The police in front have turned around now, and are waiting for him. Still trying desperately he swings to the right. He has put his hands up, and is holding them high over his head as he runs.

It is no use. There are police on the right. He is cornered. He turns, still holding high his hands. Quickly the bluecoats close in and the night sticks fly —above his head, from the sides, from the rear. His upraised arms fall limply under the flailing blows, and he slumps to the ground in a twisting fall, as the clubs continue to rain on him.

CIO officers report that when one of the victims was delivered at an undertaking establishment, it was found that his brains literally were beaten out, his skull crushed by blows.

Ensuing scenes are hardly less poignant. A man shot through the back is paralyzed from the waist. Two policemen try to make him stand up, to get into a patrol wagon, but when they let him go his legs crumple, and he falls with his face in the dirt, almost under the rear step of the wagon. He moves his head and arms, but his legs are limp. He raises his head like a turtle and claws the ground.

A man over whose white shirt front the blood is spreading perceptibly is dragged to the side of the road. Two or three policemen bend over and look at him closely. One of them shakes his head, and slips a newspaper under the wounded man's head. There is a plain intimation that he is dying. A man in civilian clothing comes up, feels his pulse a moment, then drops the hand, and walks away. Another, in a uniform which might be that of a company policeman, stops an instant, looks at the prostrate figure, and continues on his way.

The scene shifts to the patrol wagons in the rear. Men with bloody heads, bloody faces, bloody shirts, are being loaded in. One, who apparently has been shot in the leg, drags himself painfully into the picture with the aid of two policemen. An elderly man, bent almost double, holding one hand on the back of his head, clambers painfully up the steps and slumps onto the seat, burying his face in both hands. The shoulders of his white shirt are drenched with blood.

There is continuous talking, but it is difficult to distinguish anything with one exception—out of the babble there arises this clear and distinct ejaculation:

"God Almighty!"

The camera shifts back to the central scene. Here and there is a body sprawled in what appears to be the grotesque indifference of death. Far off toward the outer corner of the field, whence they came originally, the routed marchers are still in flight, with an irregular line of policemen in close pursuit. It is impossible to discern, at this distance, whether violence has ended.

A policeman, somewhat disheveled, his coat open, a scowl on his face, approaches another who is standing in front of the camera. He is sweaty and tired. He says something indistinguishable. Then his face breaks into a sudden grin, he makes motions of dusting off his hands and strides away. The film ends.

Can America Ensure Peace?

THERE is no British economist and publicist for whom we hold a higher respect than Mr. J. A. Hobson, whose communication, "Will America Stop Another War?" is printed on page 224 of this issue of The New Republic. He presents in logical and brief form the familiar argument that if the United States would join Britain, France, the Soviet Union and the rest of the League in a commitment to resist aggression from Germany, Italy or Japan, there would be no new war, because the forces opposed to any prospective disturber of the peace would be too great. Without our advance assurance, however, such a war might be started.

This is the kind of argument that has been used to support the idea of the League of Nations from the very beginning. Our considered opinion, however, is that it is too simple to take account of the facts. It assumes, first, that promises to fight against aggressors anywhere in the world can be relied upon; second, that aggression can be defined so as to leave no loophole of escape for those who have promised to resist it; third, that wars are started by military authorities on the basis of realistic calculations as to whether they can win.

It needs no argument to prove that the members of the League have not so far united in effective resistance to violations of the Covenant that have already taken place. The fear of war on the part of pacifistically inclined peoples makes them reluctant to undertake such risks when the time of decision comes. The difficulty of defining the moment at which military action becomes an obligation creates the uncertainty which permits such reluctance to be effective. Finally, the aggressor powers, counting upon this reluctance, are continually threatening to fight without really meaning to go to war, believing that by doing so they can frighten their opponents into acquiescence in their aims.

If war comes, it will probably be not because any single general staff decides upon it, but because in this tangle of bluffing and counter-bluffing some crisis or incident will make it impossible for potential combatants to withdraw. No nation wants war, but each nation wants its own way and is backing up its demands with force of arms. Under these circumstances threats, no matter how overwhelming they appear, give us no assurance that war will not ensue.

The pathetic impotence of European pacifists who have relied upon the League is traceable largely to their assumption that if everybody threatened to use arms against an aggressor, the arms would never have to be employed, and hence war need

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not be feared. Aggressors soon learn this secret. Tough-minded persons know, on the contrary, that it is foolish to make a threat unless you are prepared and willing to carry it out. We ought never to join a European compact to resist aggression unless we are ready to fight. But the people of the United States are not now willing to fight in any conceivable European struggle, and a statesman who committed them to doing so would be acting with levity.

We could not conscientiously assent to Mr. Hobson's proposal unless we envisaged the possibility of being engaged in another world war. Would such a war of "democratic peoples" achieve its assumed object of stopping fascism and assuring peace in the future? There is a fatal similarity between these new slogans and those of twenty years ago. That was a war to "make the world safe for democracy," a "war to end war." But wars fought for such noble purposes seldom achieve them. It is just as likely that in the process the "democracies" would themselves turn fascist, while war itself would bring ruin impartially on all participants. Democracy and neighborliness are not to be safeguarded by such means. In our humble opinion, it would be much more to the point to do our best to keep out of the hostilities. If at least on the North American continent the ravages of war, emotional and material, could be prevented, something might be saved out of the wreck.

In sum, we do not think it wise to threaten war under the impression that by so doing we make war impossible, or on the assumption that such a threat will exempt us from the necessity to fight. And we do not want to fight.

New Alignments in Europe?

THREE important events of the last week or so have taken place in Europe. Bilbao has fallen to the rebel forces, which is to say, to German and Italian military strength. The French government has again encountered difficulties, primarily of a financial nature, which, though perhaps only momentarily, have weakened its effectiveness in international affairs. In Soviet Russia, a profoundly disturbing degree of disaffection in the Red Army has been revealed, resulting in the execution of eight officers of the highest rank. Reports from that country indicate that the process of which this and the preceding trials and executions are a part is far from completed. A subsidiary but important additional event is the return of Germany and Italy to the Non-Intervention Committee, and their resumption of their part in the so-called blockade of Spain, practically on their own terms. Soviet Russia is reported to be gravely disturbed by this action, which was taken by France and England.

Alarmist reports are now coming from Europe that a profound change in the relations of the chief powers is under way. It is being said that the British believe the disaffection in Soviet Russia reduces that country for the present to comparative impotence and that she can be omitted from consideration. France, also, is in no condition to drive hard bargains in the immediate future. As a result, we are told, Great Britain is now working toward a four-power western European pact involving herself, France, Germany and Italy, with the USSR left out. Such a pact would be a victory for fascist diplomacy and a shrewd blow at the democratic forces.

These reports are certainly premature and probably erroneous. It is significant that they come from quarters where the wish is father to the thought, quarters that have always been opposed to the Franco-Russian understanding and hostile to the Spanish loyalists. It is true that the British government has on the whole been opposed to a victory of the Valencia regime in the Spanish civil war, preferring a stalemate and a negotiated peace in which British influence could play a preponderant role. It is also true that a section of British opinion, and an influential one, has for years been pro-German in a degree that varied with Hitler's seeming success, at home and abroad. There is no reason to believe, however, that the British have decided to go over to the fascists. The sudden cancellation of von Neurath's much-touted visit to London is a straw in the wind confirming this view. The British realize how sharply Mussolini's ambitions conflict with their own. They realize, moreover, that Hitler's promises are not worth the paper on which they are written, and that London is extremely vulnerable to German aerial attack. England's best safeguard continues to be close coöperation with France and the USSR.

Finally, such reports as we have quoted greatly overestimate the seriousness of the French crisis. Admittedly, France's financial position is a difficult one; but it is far less difficult than the "hidden panics" in Germany and Italy that are masked by the dictatorship. The Popular Front still remains and is still the brightest star of hope in Europe's gloom. Even the worst Tory in England must certainly hesitate before the consequences of such a reversal of policy as the cables have been predicting in the past few days.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1937, IN THE U. S., BY EDITORIAL PUBLICATIONS, INC., 40 EAST 49TH STREET, NEW YORK.

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The Farmer Is Financed

WHEN President Roosevelt took office in March, 1933, farmers were in a desperate state. Mortgages on nearly one-twenty-fifth of all farms had been foreclosed, and the farms put up for sale. At Le Mar, Iowa, a group of farmers threatened to hang an agent of the New York Life Insurance Company; rumors of impending violence were widespread. Six weeks after Mr. Roosevelt's inauguration, again at Le Mar, farmers dragged Judge Charles C. Bradley from his bench, smeared his face with grease, put a rope around his neck and, after indecisive councils, stole his pants.

Today, four years later, the long-term prospects of the farm debt are more favorable than ever before in the country's history, although this would be violently disputed by Mr. William Lemke, who was Union Party candidate for President, and his backer, Father Coughlin. However, to most observers what has been accomplished seems a fair-sized miracle. Chiefly responsible for it is William I. Myers, owner of an eighty-four-acre baby-chick farm at Loman, New York, professor of Farm Finance at Cornell and present governor of the Farm Credit Administration. Myers studied farming at Cornell, and came to know an older fellow alumnus, Mr. Henry Morgenthau Jr. He accompanied Morgenthau to Washington, helped him establish the FCA and, when Morgenthau went to the Treasury, succeeded him as its head. Earnest, quietly merry, decently idealistic, Myers has done an important job without squabbling or ballyhoo.

Briefly, what he has done has been to establish a new standard for farm mortgages. This he has accomplished through the federal land banks, first set up in 1917, into which he has poured new life, doubling their activities. With land-bank funds, and money provided directly by Congress, he has refinanced a large share of existing farm debt in a way to give the farmer previously unknown security of tenure.

The usual farm mortgage ran for less than five years. When it fell due, the farmer usually had to renew it, for farming is not a business that pays for itself in five years. In good times, the farmer reduced the principal with money he had saved up, and obtained a new mortgage for the remainder. In bad years, he had to default, and regularly with each depression great numbers of farmers—except where they threatened the authorities with lynching—have had their farms sold out from under them. This need never happen again. The FCA mortgages are written for terms up to thirty-odd years, and—more important—provide for annual amortization payments. When, in the future, such mortgages fall due, they will be paid for.

The FCA is a "yardstick" institution—designed, at least in part, to enforce standards on private enterprise. It has already had a striking measure of success. In the last year, as capital slowly resumed farm-mortgage lending, it has found that it had to match the FCA terms. It has done so with a sour face. In the farm areas, just as in the industrial East, there has been angry talk about government competition with private interests. But more farm mortgages are now being made to run for at least ten to fifteen years, and an increasing number provide for amortization.

It is submitted that this—if it proves to be permanent—constitutes a fundamental shift in the national structure. The foreclosure of farm mortgages has always been the paramount American tragedy. The countless plays and novels in which the son or daughter returns to the farm just in time to save his or her aged parents from being tossed into the snowdrift by a flint-hearted mortgagee are a proof of its universal significance.

However, this is not all that Myers has done. He has set up an agency for crop loans—that is, loans by which a farmer can finance himself while making his crop. The crop itself forms part of the loan's security. In his mortgage program, Myers had the land banks to build on; for the crop loans, however, he has had to create the necessary instrumentalities out of nothing.

Traditionally, the farmer has been financed between harvests by the small-town merchant, who has supplied perhaps two-thirds of the three to five billions of short-term credit required yearly. Much of the rest, especially in recent years, has been instalment credit for tractors, pumps and other expensive equipment. Often merchants to whom the farmer has been in debt have overcharged him unmercifully. According to estimates, the cost of short-term financing to the farmer has ranged from ten to forty percent. Almost as much as the tariff or industrial monopoly, it has been responsible for the high price of what he buys. Now, with cash in his pocket, the farmer will be able to buy where he pleases.

A third achievement of Myers has been to create another new agency for the financing of farm cooperatives. Although all types of coöperatives are eligible for loans, the new agency is particularly designed for marketing groups, which now sell from a tenth to a fifth of all farm products.

The great significance of the institutions proliferating out from the FCA is that they are ultimately to be farmer-managed and farmer-owned. To understand their functioning, you had best imagine yourself a farmer without a farm. Not, however, a relief client or a penniless farm laborer, because the FCA

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is not for relief. You are the tan-cheeked, but not bare-footed, farm boy, with habits of thrift and industry and an instinct for saving. A man who cannot lay by a few hundred dollars, in Myers' opinion, is neither a good risk nor a good farmer.

You want a farm. You get in your mud-spattered car and drive to the county seat, or to whatever town nearby has a National Farm Loan Association. Once you have convinced the NFLA's secretary-treasurer of your experience and good character, he will lend you about 50 percent of the value of your chosen farm, if you are able to pay the balance. As part of the transaction, you must take stock in the NFLA to the amount of five percent of your mortgage, thus becoming a member of a neighborhood mortgage-credit coöperative. The NFLA, in turn, takes an equal amount of land-bank stock.

There are about five thousand individual NFLA's. Before the depression they owned all of the stock in the Federal Land Banks. In the last five years, the government has thrown large amounts of new capital into them, and farmers, through their associations, now own only 47 percent. The NFLA's, however, continue to obtain their funds not from their own resources, but by rediscounting the mortgages they purchase with the twelve federal land banks, which operate as part of the FCA.

You now have your farm. You need funds with which to buy seed, livestock, fertilizer, fence-wire —the innumerable things needed to make a crop. Again you get in your car, and this time hunt out a Production Credit Association. As before, you take stock in the PCA to the amount of five percent of your loan. The PCA's have been created by Myers; there are now about 550 of them, and farmers hold about 13 percent of their $86,000,000 capital. The PCA's rediscount their loans with twelve federal intermediate-credit banks, established in 1923. Like the land banks, they are part of the FCA.

Myers thinks that there are too many NFLA's and too few PCA's for the 3,000 farm counties of the country. At present, the principal energies of the FCA are devoted to promoting collaboration between the two systems of credit. The ultimate hope is to have NFLA's and PCA's occupy joint offices, with joint secretary-treasurers, thus permitting a saving on overhead, and the employment of full-time personnel. Nearly a hundred joint offices have already been achieved. In about six hundred other cases, NFLA's and PCA's have concluded working agreements of varying kinds.

With your PCA loan, you return to your farm, rise before the sun and work sixteen hours daily —being careful to let enough of your land lie fallow to qualify for soil-conservation payments—until autumn, when you get your harvest. There is a marketing coöperative, we will assume, in your neighborhood. You offer your crop to the coöperative, which, obtaining money from Myers' new Banks for Cooperatives, is able to pay you in full, or at least give you a liberal part of the current market price. You then make your interest and amortization payments on your mortgage with the NFLA, and discharge your crop loan with the PCA. Do this for twenty years running, and you will have your farm clear of debt and be a man of property.

Where does the money come from? Except for special depression and drought funds voted by Congress, it does not come from the government, as Myers is never tired of emphasizing. Mostly it comes from the spot hated by farmers, Wall Street. The twelve federal land banks, with which the NFLA's rediscount their mortgages, sell their bonds to private investors. Recently they have marketed bonds, entirely without government backing, at three percent. This has made it possible for the NFLA's to lend to the farmer at four percent, the lowest rate for mortgage money in farm history. The one-percent differential is for the purpose of covering clerical overhead, legal fees, losses and reserves.

The twelve intermediate credit banks, which furnish funds for the PCA's as well as the Banks for Coöperatives, issue a consolidated debenture, with short maturities. Lately they have been able to obtain funds at slightly more than one percent. They charge the PCA's two percent, and the PCA's charge the farmer five percent. This much larger differential is considered necessary because of the newness of the PCA's, and the higher cost of servicing crop loans as compared with mortgages. Five percent, however, is an amazingly low rate for short-term farm credit.

It will be seen that the effect of this complete set of institutions is to create a conduit running between the farmer in Le Mar, Iowa—for example—and the credit pool of the great financial centers. The farmer obtains his money at a first cost no greater than that paid by the Pennsylvania Railroad or the United States Steel Corporation. His final cost, the amount he pays the NFLA's and PCA's, is of course greater, but the NFLA's and PCA's are his own institutions, and if he can reduce their operating costs he will receive the benefits. More than 800,000 farmers, about one in eight, are now part of the FCA system. In 1936, 65,291 obtained mortgages totaling $186,428,000, and 238,000 obtained PCA loans of $228,090,000. Coöperatives to the number of 1,439 borrowed $81,294,000.

Mr. Myers believes—and most observers agree with him—that the great task of the FCA is to create and preserve stability in farm finances. "Land booms do not bring lasting welfare to farmers or farm people," he says. During the last four years, the FCA has encouraged liberal valuations in making mortgages, and properly so, since values have been badly depressed. But if values start to soar—and some observers already profess to see the faint shadow of a land boom—will the FCA be able to reverse its policy? Such a reversal would not be popular, and would require courage. The same problem exists with short-term credit, which in good times has often been used for unnecessary purchases.

So much for the workings of the FCA. What effect is it likely to have? Its effect on the farmers in general should be very great, if—and this is the chief

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"if" about the FCA—the farmers welcome it and use it. It should be obvious that the FCA's program has been drafted for the traditional farmer, the man who wants a farm to live on and earn his living by. Mr. Myers states: "It is a national policy to promote owner-operation of farms, and we are glad to render this service [of the FCA] to deserving young men." The greatest peril of the family farmer has been debt. Insects, drought and low prices have never been able to drive him from his land; debt has. The FCA offers him definitely greater security of tenure than ever before.

The continued survival of the traditional farmer, if it occurs, contains immensely important social implications. A few years ago, many observers believed that corporation farming, or other forms of large-scale operation, were destined to convert farmers into a small group of managers and a mass of workers. Since the beginning of the depression, in part because of the skillful, forceful leadership of Myers, the trend toward large-scale farming has been reversed, and the number of owner-operators has grown from 2,911,000 to 3,210,000. Myers believes that the owner-operator will keep on increasing. In the long run, the question of survival will be decided by the relative efficiency of units of various sizes, rather than by any credit policy.

JONATHAN MITCHELL.

Origins of Socialism

III: *The Communities of Fourier and Owen*

THE PARTIES of the workers predicted by Saint-Simon were actually to be organized very soon—though they were not to proceed straight, as he had imagined, to the realization of the new Christian society. But in the meantime, certain other prophets were to try to create by themselves small seminal new worlds inside the old.

Charles Fourier and Robert Owen, ten years younger than Saint-Simon and Babeuf, are closely similar figures who follow almost parallel careers, as they represent tendencies which were specially characteristic of the first part of the nineteenth century. Fourier was a draper's son from Besançon, who had gone on the road as a traveling salesman; Owen was a Welsh saddle-maker's son, who had worked as a draper's clerk. Both had lost faith, as Saint-Simon had done, in the liberal politics of the time and both stood outside its conventional culture. Fourier was never tired of denouncing the tradition of European philosophy, in the light of whose guidance humanity had "bathed itself in blood for twenty-three scientific centuries," and he believed that it was the purpose of God to discredit the professional philosophers, to confute all "those libraries of politics and morals," by selecting him, Charles Fourier, "a shop clerk, almost an illiterate," as the expositor of his secrets to mankind. The mistake of the statesmen for a thousand years had been, according to Fourier, to occupy themselves only with abuses of a religious and administrative character. "The divine code should legislate first of all on industry, the primordial function"; but it had been only very recently that the governments had begun to do this and then they had taken the wrong direction in favoring "industrial division and commercial fraud, dressed up as 'free competition.'" It is possible that Robert Owen had been influenced by William Godwin, the author of the "Enquiry Concerning Political Justice" (1793); but he seems never to have mentioned this or any other book of the kind and was never seen to read anything but statistics. His attempts to work through political machinery were unsuccessful and brief: he asserted that it was impossible to "expect anything resembling a rational 'something,' to relieve the widely extending distress of society" from "Radicals, Whigs or Tories—or from any particular religious sect."

Robert Owen has the look in his portraits of a great smooth meditative hare, with an assertive, independent English nose, but an elliptically oval face and deep innocent elliptical eyes that seem to stretch right around his cheeks; and Fourier's face, over its high white cravat, has something of the same odd simplification—though with the dignity of the strong old French rationalism, with its straight mouth and thin Roman nose and its lucid and religious eyes, a little too wide apart.

Both Owen and Fourier were persons of remarkable unworldliness and directness; both were capable of relentless persistency. Both combined in a peculiar fashion the deepest humanitarian sympathies with a passion for systematic exactitude. Both had had experience at first hand of the worst aspects of that industrial-commercial system which was coming at an accelerating pace to dominate Western society. Fourier had lost his patrimony and narrowly escaped the guillotine at the time of the siege of Lyons by the revolutionary troops of the Convention; he had seen the population of Lyons reduced to the utmost degradation by the growth of the textile industry; and he had once seen a cargo of rice thrown into the water at Marseilles after it had been purposely allowed to rot by his employers, who had succeeded in cornering the market and wanted to keep up the price during a famine. Fourier's abhorrence of cruelty, his almost insane capacity for pity, which had compelled him as a

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schoolboy to take frightful beatings in defense of his smaller companions and which at sixty sent him walking for hours in the rain in an effort to do something for a poor servant girl whom he had never even seen but of whom he had heard that her mistress ill-treated her—this stern overmastering impulse to render human life less painful inspired him with an optimistic certainty, and drove him to unrewarded labors, themselves almost insane. Not merely did he work out in his strange life of solitude all the complicated interrelations of the groups which were to compose his ideal communities and the precise proportions of the buildings which were to house them; but he believed himself able to calculate that the world would last precisely 80,000 years and that by the end of that time every soul would have traveled 810 times between the earth and certain other planets which he regarded as certainly inhabited, and would have experienced a succession of existences to the precise number of 1626.

Robert Owen, like Fourier, was peculiarly sensitive to suffering: he was to look back all his life on a dancing school to which he had been sent as a child and where he had seen the disappointment of little girls who had not been able to get partners, as a veritable place of torment. He had left home on his own at the age of ten and had made his way up so rapidly that at twenty he had found himself in sole charge of a cotton factory in Manchester, with five hundred workers under him. One of the earliest exploiters of the new cotton-spinning devices, he was soon struck by the terrible discrepancy between "the great attention given to the dead machinery, and the neglect and disregard of the living machinery"; and became aware that "bad and unwise as American slavery is and must continue to be, the white slavery in the manufactories of England was at this unrestricted period far worse than the house slaves whom I afterwards saw in the West Indies and in the United States, and in many respects, especially as regards health, food and clothing, the latter were much better provided for than were those oppressed and degraded children and work-people in the home manufactories of Great Britain"—let alone the tenants and servants on the great English country estates, as he had known them at the end of the eighteenth century. Nor was it the work-people merely who suffered: their employers themselves were debased. "I was completely tired of partners who were merely trained to buy cheap and sell dear. This occupation deteriorates and often destroys the finest and best faculties of our nature. From an experience of a long life, in which I passed through all the gradations of trade, manufactures and commerce, I am thoroughly convinced that there can be no superior character formed under this thoroughly selfish system. Truth, honesty, virtue, will be mere names, as they are now, and as they have ever been. Under this system, there can be no true civilization; for by it all are trained civilly to oppose and often to destroy one another by their created opposition of interests. It is a low, vulgar, ignorant and inferior mode of conducting the affairs of society; and no permanent, general and substantial improvement can arise until it shall be superseded by a superior mode of forming character and creating wealth."

But though Fourier believed he had repudiated the philosophy of the Revolution and Owen claimed to have reached his conclusions from observation alone, both based their proposals on a doctrine of Rousseau which so permeated the air of the time that one did not need to imbibe it by reading: the doctrine that mankind is naturally good and that it is only institutions which have perverted it. Fourier asserted that human nature could be unpacked like the contents of a tool-chest into a limited number of human "passions"—that is, of instincts and interests—which had been given us by God for different ends. All were necessary, and the trouble with modern society was simply that these "passions" were misused. If only the proper passions could be directed to the proper uses, the reign of "Harmony" would prevail. And the whole career of Robert Owen was one long reiteration of the principle that men had been made what they were by education and early influences over which they had no control and that if only the right things instead of the wrong could be taught them during their formative years, they could be rendered, as he put it, with "mathematical precision"—universally happy and good.

In order to demonstrate that the interest of each was compatible with the interest of all, both Fourier and Owen proposed that limited self-contained communities should be organized inside the larger community.

The communities demanded by Fourier were to be dependent on private capital and they were not to aim at complete equality. There was to be universal suffrage, and the children of the rich and the poor were to be given the same education; and Fourier saw the undesirability of including in the same community people of too widely differing incomes. Yet there were to be differences of income and a hierarchy—though a hierarchy of an unconventional kind: the capitalists were not to stand at the top. In the distribution of income by dividend (after a minimum subsistence had been guaranteed), capital was to get only four-twelfths while five-twelfths was to go to labor and three-twelfths to talent. Disagreeable work was to be paid for at a higher rate than work not unpleasant; and necessary work was to rank higher than work that was merely useful, as useful work was to take precedence over work that produced merely luxuries.

It was to Fourier simply a question of organizing the people in relation to the work in such a way that all the human "passions" should be made to serve beneficent ends. There was something that everybody liked to do, so there was no reason why everything should not get done. There was a good use for every human impulse, so there was no reason why

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they should not all be satisfied. And there was therefore no reason why anybody's work should not be attractive to him. It was not even necessary that people should bore or fatigue themselves by working continually at one task: everyone had his own set of tastes, his own combination of passions, but it would be possible for him to gratify them all by engaging in various activities. Industrial efficiency was to be stimulated, as it is in Russia today, by the rivalry of different groups. Fourier had worked out a scheme which, besides making everyone happy, was to result in increased production. Two problems which had troubled him—why boys love dirt and how the refuse of the community was to be got rid of—were found to solve one another reciprocally: the boys were to dispose of the refuse.

Robert Owen's communities, on the other hand, were to realize absolute equality. Their only hierarchy was based on age: the mature who should not yet have become aged were to constitute the governing council. The children were to be taken from their parents at three and brought up by special educators and nurses. The unit of the medium of exchange was to be an hour's worth of labor.

Fourier had announced to the public that he would be at home at noon every day, ready to discuss his projects with any rich persons who might be interested in financing them. But though he was there every day on the dot for ten years, no patron ever appeared. Fourier died in 1837, still firm in his faith, but deeply chagrined.

Owen did, however, succeed in creating his ideal community. He asserted that Fourier, who had at one time looked to him for help, had learned from him his basic idea of practising communism in limited groups; and, in any case, it is Robert Owen who is the principal figure here—and one of the most amazing figures of his time.

Robert Owen's actual exploits sound today as fantastic as the romances of his period: the "Caleb Williamses" and the "Frankensteins." A social idealist as disinterested as Fourier, he had a career which recalls that of Henry Ford. When Owen first took possession of the cotton mills at New Lanark, Scotland, they were operated by a crew of dirty and drunken and extremely unreliable men and women —at that time it implied a lack of self-respect to work in a mill at all—and by children between five and ten shipped in from the orphan asylums. Out of the material of this wretched population, to which he had come with the special disadvantage of being a Welshman among the Scotch, he was able to create in a quarter of a century a community with a high standard of living and a considerable degree of education, by whom Owen himself was adored. He paid them higher wages and had them work shorter hours than any of his competitors did, and he carried them through periods of slump. He limited to a fixed amount the returns to be paid to his partners and he put the rest back into the community in improvements. Was it not obvious, he kept asking the world, that this was how the whole of society should be run? If only all the children were educated as he educated his workers' children, taking them from their parents early and training them without punishment or harshness, should we not have a new human race?

It did not occur to Owen at first to ask where the human materials were to be found or where the conditions for molding them were to be possible. He did not see that human beings were so generally imperfect that the prime questions were where to begin and who was to be trusted to do the beginning. He himself had begun at New Lanark on the most unpromising human beings conceivable. And it had never occurred to him that he himself was a man of exceptionally high character and that it was he and not the natural goodness of the children of those ill conditioned parents who had made New Lanark a model community. He did not understand that New Lanark was a machine which he himself had built and which he had to control and keep going.

For Robert Owen in his factory played the role of a benevolent but omnipotent God. When he discovered that his urgings were not enough to make his employees industrious and honest, he worked out ways to check up on them and restrain them. He had hung up over his workers at their work little four-sided pieces of wood, which had a different color on each side and a different grade of conduct assigned to each color. He could then see on any day when he walked through, from the color turned out by the foreman, how every employee had behaved the day before. Whenever he encountered one of the colors which signified "bad or inferior conduct," he would simply fix his eyes on the delinquent worker as he passed. Under this system, he was gratified to observe that the colors changed gradually from black to blue, from blue to yellow, and finally to white. These gradings were all entered in a register so that he could always find out after an absence how the workers had been behaving while he was away. And he devised an infallible method for detecting and locating thefts. And yet Owen, who had never realized that he had created this moral universe himself, was always surprised when his schoolmasters went elsewhere and could not get the same results as at New Lanark and when his communities failed to prosper when left to the direction of others. (William Lovett, one of the leaders of the Chartists, who worked with him afterwards in the coöperative movement, says that he was essentially undemocratic and despotic and quite impossible to collaborate with on any equal basis.)

Gradually, however, as Owen discovered that his partners rebelled against his methods, that he was always being obliged to look for new partners and that it was becoming harder and harder to find them, he was forced to face the fact that the capitalists were a greedy and unenlightened lot. And his faith was further shaken when a bill against child labor (the first to be introduced in England) which

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he had tried to lobby through Parliament was not only fiercely opposed by the cotton-spinners but ultimately emasculated at their insistence by politicians like Peel whom he had trusted. Looking for light to the political economists in London, he was amazed to find them men of no practical experience, who were engaged, as he contended, simply in constructing systems to rationalize the bad practices of the manufacturers. When he was invited to attend a conference on the desperate economic conditions which had followed the Napoleonic wars, a conference composed of people who had formerly impressed him by reputation, prominent economists, philanthropists, statesmen and business men, and presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury, he discovered that he, an uneducated man, was the only person present who understood that the current unemployment had been caused by the release of men from the services and by the sudden collapse of the market which had been created by the needs of the war; and that he was able to astound the assembly by explaining to them that millions of people had been thrown out of work by machinery. When in his youth he had been manager of the cotton factory, the owner, who lived quite near, had never come to visit it but once—in order to show it to a foreign visitor; but Robert Owen had never drawn the moral. Now he began to be afraid that it would take longer than he had thought to make people understand the truth.

Yet, at that time, they gave him their attention, the prime ministers, the archbishops, the princes: they had begun to be gravely alarmed by the unrest of the lower orders, and here was a man who had given proof that he knew how to keep the lower orders happy. Owen was still able to believe in their disinterestedness: it had never occurred to him that for persons like them, in positions of high responsibility, it would be possible to desire anything other than the general amelioration of humanity. Then a critical incident occurred which caused him to change his mind.

Robert Owen attended in 1817 a Congress of Sovereigns at Aix-la-Chapelle, and he met there a veteran diplomat, the secretary of the Congress. Owen explained to this personage that it was now possible, through the extraordinary progress of science—if only mankind could be persuaded to coöperate in its own best interests—for the whole of the human race, and no longer merely the privileged few, to be well educated, well nourished and well bred. He had been telling all sorts of people this; but now he was to be startled by the secretary's reply. Yes, the veteran diplomat said, they all knew that very well—the governing powers of Europe he represented—and that was just what they didn't want. If the masses became well off and independent, how were they to be controlled by the governing classes? "After this confession by the secretary, the discussion lost much of its interest in my mind, for I had discovered that I had a long and arduous task before me, to convince governments and governed of the gross ignorance under which they were contending against each other, in direct opposition to the real interests and true happiness of both. I now foresaw that the prejudices which I had to overcome in all classes in all countries were of the most formidable character, and that, in addition to illimitable patience and perseverance, it would require the wisdom said to be possessed by the serpent, with the harmlessness of the dove, and the courage of the lion." However, he had "passed the Rubicon, and was strongly impressed to proceed onward in a straight course."

But the authorities had already begun to realize that in Owen they had to do with a subversive idealist force. He had declared on a public platform that the chief enemy of truth was religion; and he had attacked not merely religion, but property and the family as well (thus going much farther than Fourier, who had attempted in his projected community, to keep modified forms of all three.) Now the churches began to oppose him, and his friends became afraid to associate with him.

He decided that Europe was diseased, that he must resort to a fresh part of the world, if he was to get the new society started. He came to the United States and took over from a religious sect, the Rappites, the town of New Harmony, Indiana, with thirty thousand acres. He announced on July 4, 1826, a "Declaration of Mental Independence" from the three great oppressors of humanity: "Private Property, Irrational Religion and Marriage," and he invited to join his community "the industrious and well disposed of all nations." Then he went back to Europe and left it. But the Americans were no better than the English—indeed, at New Harmony they proved worse. The Westerners were not so docile as the Scotch proletariat of New Lanark; and the unrestricted invitation had brought all sorts of drifters and rascals. Owen had taken into partnership an unscrupulous character named Taylor, whom, when he returned, he thought it desirable to get rid of. Taylor made Owen buy him out with a tract of land, on which he (Taylor) said he wanted to found a community of his own. The night before the deal was settled, Taylor smuggled a lot of farm implements and cattle onto the property, so that they were included in the transfer the next day. Then he flouted Owen's preachments of temperance by setting up a whisky distillery on the place; and opened a tan-yard which competed with Owen's. New Harmony hardly lasted three years. Owen finally sold the property to individuals.

He made other such attempts in England and Ireland and sank a good deal of money in these communities. He seems to have had singularly little head for money. In the early days in New Lanark, when the cotton trade had been booming, when he had had only his original community and had been able to supervise it himself, this weakness had not been apparent; but now he would squander great sums on equipment and plant for other people with

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no notion as to how they were to be maintained.

He was finally reduced to such straits that his sons were obliged to support him.

And now, no longer a rich manufacturer, and out of favor with the governing classes, he began to play an entirely new role. The Reform Act of 1832 had won the vote for the middle class only, and left the working class disillusioned and rebellious. Owen, disillusioned, too, allied himself with the working class. He was not even any longer an employer; he had given up even New Lanark. And he now allowed himself to be associated with an Owenite Coöperative Movement, and with the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union.

But he was still too impatient of political methods, too convinced, in spite of all his experience, of the obviousness and necessity of his system, to be able to serve with much effect in the long grinding battle of labor. The trade-union movement went to pieces within a year after he had organized it. He had very little interest in or sympathy with the Chartist Movement and the Corn Law Agitation: it was still impossible for him not to believe that it would be much easier to establish equality at a stroke and once and for all. And, finding mankind still so backward, he had recourse to superterrestrial forces. He came in his last days to believe that all the magnanimous souls he had known, Shelley, Thomas Jefferson, Channing, the Duke of Kent (though he forgot that the latter had failed to pay back the considerable sums of money he had borrowed from him)—all those who when living had listened to him with sympathy, of whom he felt that they really shared his vision, and who were lost to him now through death—he came to believe that after death they were returning, to make appointments with him and to keep them, to talk to him and reassure him.

He needed them to confirm those intuitions which had come to him many years before and of which the time was not giving proof—intimations that "some change of high import, scarcely yet perhaps to be scanned by the present ill taught race of men," was "evidently in progress"; that "fortunately for mankind, the system of individual opposing interests" had "now reached the extreme point of error and inconsistency," since "in the midst of the most ample means to create wealth, all are in poverty, or in imminent danger from the effects of poverty upon others"; that the "principle of union" was very soon to take the place of the "principle of disunion," and that then all men should understand that "the happiness of self" could "only be attained by conduct that must promote the happiness of the community."

Robert Owen, his money made and spent, went back in 1858 to die in a house next to his father's saddle-shop in the little town in Wales where he had been born, and from which he had set out at ten on that fabulous rise in the world which had landed him on the ground floor of the cotton trade.

EDMUND WILSON.

This is the third of a series of four articles on the origins of socialism. The last will appear in an early issue.—THE EDITORS.

Not in the Cables

Uncensored News Accounts of What Is Happening Abroad

I: The Swastika in Hungary

RECENT disclosures of Nazi revolutionary activities in Hungary have come as a great shock to the Magyars. They have been keeping their eyes so intently on the German offensive against Czechoslovakia—a nation they hate—as to be blind to the Nazi threat at home. The late Premier Gömboes saw eye-to-eye with General Göring, was, in fact, a boon companion of Germany's Number Two Nazi. So heartily did the Gömboes regime collaborate with its colleagues in Berlin that Hitler's men began to speak of Hungary as a Nazi "colony."

But the Reich was not satisfied with merely winning over the Gömboes government. Nazi agents set to work to line up the half-million German minority. Disguised as peddlers or members of student walking clubs, Nazi agents have visited every Teutonic village in Hungary, leaving in each community National Socialist party cells and military units. Such Swabian or Magyar organizations as the Arrow Cross, the Scythe Cross, the Blue Cross and the Fire-Line are all fascist. Some of them are definitely under orders from Berlin. Storm-troop battalions, much like those which existed in Germany before Hitler came to power, have been growing rapidly in Hungary. Anti-Semitism is rising.

Recently, however, the Magyars have been shocked into a realization of the true state of affairs. The Nazi movement in Hungary has grown to such an extent that it has become an acute menace to the government. Several abortive plots to engineer a Nazi *Putsch* have been uncovered. Dr. Tibor Eckhardt, leader of the small farmers' party, charges that "there are thirty-nine [Nazi] newspapers and other publications in the country that shower abuse on Hungary and the Hungarians and stir up disorder." His accusation is highly significant, inasmuch as he is an uncompromising champion of Hungarian interests against the states of the Little Entente. He is, moreover, an opponent of the

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Soviet Union. As for his attitude toward the Reich, "We do not concern ourselves," he says, "with what is happening in Germany. Let her leave us alone to manage our internal affairs."

The death of Premier Gömboes last October removed Hitler's most trusted Magyar supporter. But the new Premier, Koloman Daranyi, was the Gömboes Minister of Agriculture. Apparently, little initiative can be expected from the present government unless powerful pressure is exerted by the anti-Nazi Magyars. Indications that such pressure is strengthening lend encouragement to those leaders who are fighting the German invasion. At a meeting in Szeged on March 7, Deputy Makray, a Monarchist, declared: "No corporal or pocket Hitler is going to introduce the sway of the un-Christian swastika over us. We must take off our gloves and fight these conspirators." The mobilization of anti-Nazi opposition around the standards of such leaders as Dr. Eckhardt and Count Bethlen has finally driven the government to take some belated action against the Hungarian Hitlerites.

But fascism's most dangerous breeding ground in Hungary is her impoverished villages. To the unfortunate peasantry, both Magyar and Swabian, the alluring promises made by Hitler's agents offer an incentive to join the Nazi movement in hope of relief from their squalor. Hungary's social system is feudalistic. The great Magyar landlords apparently have learned nothing from revolutionary movements in other countries. They continue to sit on the lid of the powder-keg. HENRY C. WOLFE.

II: Sweden's Monetary Policy

ERNST WIGFORSS, Swedish Minister of Finance, recently shocked financial Europe by discussing before the Riksdag the dangers of rising world prices to the domestic stability of the krona. He intimated that it might become necessary to lower the exchange rate on England, and also to adopt more stringent measures of domestic credit control. So great was the excitement of Continental financiers that the very next day Mr. Wigforss modified his statement to the effect that action was no more needed today than it was last March when he officially denied rumors of impending changes in exchange rates.

What he then said was a reiteration of the government's pledge to "maintain the stability of the krona in the hands of the consumers"—first given when gold was abandoned in 1931. Skeptical gold-standard enthusiasts, particularly in this country, maintained that it could not be done. When Sweden did it, they still pooh-poohed the idea. "All she did," they said, "was to peg to sterling. That's easy so long as it means following a policy of credit expansion. But just wait and see what happens if Sweden attempts to break loose from sterling once England has a real inflation. Then this so-called 'management' of the krona will blow up."

Braking the boom would indeed be a superb test of Sweden's money management. Probably she would merely adopt a lower sterling rate which she would maintain until further rising British and world prices necessitated a still lower rate. If today Sweden lowered her exchange rate for pounds by 10 percent—and incidentally lowered her price for gold by 10 percent—she would not appreciably affect world prices of her exports, but she would automatically and correspondingly lower the krona prices her importers pay for foreign goods. Thus lower exchange rates could offset higher foreign prices of goods, just as raising exchange rates—raising the price of gold—offsets falling gold prices during the depression.

Swedish economists generally advised against publicly discussing impending changes in money policy to avoid causing groundless fears and stimulating speculation. Norway and Finland may almost certainly be expected to go along if Sweden takes the initiative of reducing her sterling rate. For they too have promised to maintain the domestic stability of their currencies; and they are both afraid of the British price rise. Moreover, as these three Scandinavian countries are competitors in exporting wood products, none of them could act independently without giving the exporters of the others an undue advantage.

Sweden was the first country officially to declare domestic stability of her money to be the aim of her monetary policy. Slowly most other countries came to realize that this is the best policy to follow. Her action to prevent inflation from overtaking her may likewise become the signal for other countries to do the same, and thus be the beginning of world monetary stability. HANS R. L. COHRSSEN.

III: Ireland's New Constitution

THE NEW Irish Constitution marks the culmination of Mr. De Valera's policy for the last six years, and adumbrates his intentions for the next seven that his new office as President of Eire will afford him. Externally it ends the symbols of English domination in Ireland; internally it provides for the perpetuation of the Catholic Nationalist philosophy of the Fianna Fail Party[1] as the ruling force in Irish politics. The relicts of English domination preserved in the Treaty of 1921 were four: the office of Governor General, the supremacy of the Privy Council over the Irish judiciary, the payment of the Land Annuities (national debts going back to 1880), and British warships in strategic Irish ports.

The office of Governor General, viewed as a link with the past, was a mere farce. The King automatically ratified the choice of the Irish Cabinet. It was Mr. Cosgrave who abolished the jurisdiction of

[1] The Fianna Fail Party, now the government, is the extreme Nationalist group which refused to sign the Treaty of 1921. Fine Gael is a coalition of Independents and the remains of Mr. Cosgrave's Treaty Party.

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the Privy Council over Irish courts five years after the Treaty was signed. The land annuities discontinued by the De Valera administration are now paid to England in the form of duties on our exported cattle. The warships are still stationed in the strategic Irish ports, and even the President has consented graciously that we shall be protected by the defense forces of the Empire in time of war. Last of all, the Treaty created the new State of Northern Ireland. Mr. De Valera announces the sovereign indivisibility of Ireland but recognizes the *de-facto* existence of the Six Counties of Ulster. Thus, in foreign relations, the new Constitution is a statement of old facts by euphonious new names.

As to internal politics, the addition of the prerogatives in the new Constitution makes De Valera virtually a dictator. He has the right to appoint or dismiss all members of the executive. He fills the judicature. Through his appointee, the Prime Minister, he controls eleven of the sixty seats in the Senate. His signature is necessary to give effect to all bills. He holds office for seven years, and may only be removed on a vote of two-thirds of the Senate and a subsequent trial before the Dail. This constitution is not modeled on any other. It is an *ad-hoc* creation to transfer the President's views for the future Ireland into material terms.

This envisages a country of small holders whose holdings range from ten acres to forty. Ireland shall be economically self-supporting. New small-scale industries have been launched and supported by bounties in order that they may produce goods sufficiently low-priced to compete against foreign imports. No changes in the educational system are mooted. At present all primary, and two-thirds of the secondary schools are directly or indirectly under clerical control. Irish politics are run on two-party lines, for the present Labor Party is an appendage of Fianna Fail, and represents the interests of organized labor in no sense intelligible in other countries. The main opposition party, Fine Gael, headed by Mr. Cosgrave, does not differ ideologically from Fianna Fail. Since it lost control of the administration, this party has only been consistent in trying to steal Mr. De Valera's thunder, notably by demanding the recognition of the Franco Junta in Spain—this was an effort to obtain clerical support—and by offering compromise on the Land Annuities question. The popularity of De Valera is so enormous that no opposition party has a chance at present.

The generalized philosophizing in the Constitution, with its emphasis on the integrity of the family, and the maintenance of the Church and the rights of private property, is designed to combat the accusations of communism with which the President has been taunted with little justice. His policy is, in effect, almost identical with that of the late Austrian dictator, Engelbert Dolfuss. It aims at the creation of a small republic screened from all outside influences, speaking an elaborately resurrected language and pledged to a small-holder economy without coöperatives.

DAVID GRENE.

Gossip

GOSSIP feeds on fallibility. The weaknesses of our dearest friends, so long as they are not actually bleeding from them, are likely to amuse us. We are touched with a sort of mild malice, for example, when our best friend becomes the slave of his own characteristics, and behind his back we'll share a smile with his other good friends when he reels off his traits unknown to himself. That doesn't prove a lack of affection, but it shows that our ego declines to be held to submissiveness. If I am laughed at, I pay back my friends in their own coin, and I do it out of a fund of observation. In the bosom of the family I reveal that I am aware of the human limitations of everyone I know. When I have slept badly or have neuralgia and dwell exclusively and exhaustively on these limitations, I admit it is tiresome, even to myself.

If friends do, in practice, allow themselves the bitter-sweet of perception, outsiders revel in the bitter-sweet without insisting on the perception. The chief figure in a public scandal is quickly made into the lowest of the low by people who do not know her, and who know no one who does, but who are satisfied to scratch since fate has given them a scratching post. This relieves malice without arousing opposition or risking retort. The public seems to need a fresh object of execration from time to time.

The germ of backbiting is to be found in this detached enjoyment of fallibility, whether a friend's or a stranger's. To keep our ego at the level where we wish to have it, the level of self-esteem, we must of necessity look down on those who lower the level or have it in their power to do so. The Irish saw the English as "materialists" so long as the English reproached the Irish by looking infernally prosperous. This does not mean that "materialists" could not exist, but the Irish accusation was seldom a true criticism. It was backbiting.

It is important not to confuse criticism and backbiting. Ordinary backbiting helps a man's self-esteem. The backbiter is not seriously pulling down the other fellow. He is pulling himself up, and often because his own estimate of himself is too modest. When you hear a criticism, the great thing is to know whether it is serious criticism or just ordinary natural pleasurable malicious backbiting.

H. G. Wells, for example, has scratched and bitten Bernard Shaw in public over and over again. This, in its total effect, doesn't mean a thing. Or it only means that Wells's ego, ballooning out in its comfortable way, to the delight of its naturally modest proprietor, finds itself suddenly hampered, bulges against an obstruction that turns out to be Bernard Shaw's reputation, and then, quivering with shock and surprise, leads Wells to demand the demolition of Shaw.

Before this sort of thing was put into print, their candid friends must have known about it. But to have told Shaw that Wells believed he had no

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brains, exasperating as it might have been even to the saintly Shaw, would have given no real clue to Wells's serious opinion. Granted the natural thinness of skin that goes with a distended and outsize ego at the moment of maximum expansion, the irritation from another expanded ego must be considerable, at least on impact. Wells has betrayed this irritation more than once, yet he and Shaw are friends, Wells is a friendly man by nature. I once heard him say, "I hate no one!" That was on a morning when he had run into no obstacle in blowing up his balloon. And by this balloon he has soared aloft. Without the gas in his balloon supplied by self-confidence, he could not have accomplished a tithe of his prodigious and marvelous work. A little gas of this kind is essential to sustained altitude.

Don't, don't ever, repeat ordinary backbiting. It transforms the subjective process of deflating the other fellow into an objective process of defaming him.

A man's reputation is not decided by gossip, and it is seldom of solemn importance to the fellow who speaks slightingly. That fellow may seek to deflate it, to reduce it to proportions he finds intelligible, but his partner in the gossip knows that the proportions are dictated by self-esteem. He must be allowed to pull his man down because the enjoyment of his own faculties involves ancient lights, and he must tear down the upstart who overlooks him. He must belittle him, but only for that reason.

Besides, tale-bearing forces your friend to assert his own worth against the belittling of such trifles as his intelligence, his style or taste or workmanship. Suppose your best friend's facial beauty has been dispraised in your presence. That should not be tale-borne to her, because she cannot insist on her beauty, even to you. Ah, if you refused to listen to the criticism, if you stood up to the critic, that might be repeated. "I told the bastard that I thought you very beautiful." A delicate rebuttal like that could be quoted with unction.

When your friend is defamed, however, something may have to be done. An attack on his character is a positive thing. You should immediately take out a notebook and say, "I want to get this straight. You say my friend and his wife are not legally married. Do you mean, according to Church law, or to the laws of South Dakota, or in the eyes of Malinowsky?" This is assuming you are still a bourgeois and feel it matters.

All the whispered nothings about your friends' homosexuality, their kleptomania, their pathological lying—pin it down. Perhaps your friends accept their homosexuality as they might their membership in the Republican Party. But it is feeble to go back to them with: "I didn't like to *say* anything."

To spot the defamation of your friends' character in good time, to make a prompt tackle and nail it down—that is Service. But to repeat it later, deploring it and soothing it down—that is not only rather lame, it has a tincture of malice in it. Better a Victorian silence.

FRANCIS HACKETT.

Washington Notes

Van Zeeland and the Anglo-American Trade Treaty—Free Trade Doesn't Jibe with Fascism—Relief as a Political Pawn

IN THEIR talks with lanky, quizzical Premier van Zeeland, it is a fair guess that Messrs. Roosevelt and Hull have stressed the proposed Anglo-American trade treaty. This treaty seems to have become the chief immediate objective of American foreign policy. Whatever he may have thought a few months ago, Mr. Roosevelt has apparently dropped all thought of summoning an international conference about peace, disarmament, trade or anything else. The administration is anxious to do something about gold and currency stability, but it recognizes that that action must await the ending of the present crisis of confidence in France, and in Europe generally.

Because of the importance attached to the Anglo-American trade treaty, the just-ended Imperial Conference in London was followed with lively attention. In the opinion of independent observers, the Conference has neither helped nor injured the treaty's prospects. Several weeks ago, a detailed list of the tariff concessions we hoped to obtain, together with the concessions we were ready to give, was dispatched to the British Foreign Office. During the Conference, it was minutely combed over by the Dominion prime ministers. As was anticipated, the broad plan of an Anglo-American treaty was loudly approved; equally loud protests were made against some of the changes proposed.

The State Department is stiffly mute about the list sent to London. But from non-American sources I learn that it covered methodically the whole field of trade exchanges between America and England, and included many items that it was foreseen would arouse opposition. According to rumor, one of the proposals to cause trouble concerned California raisins. Australia also exports raisins; there is a dried-fruit lobby in Australia and dried fruit is a ticklish political issue at Canberra. Whether this story is true or not, it is a fact that Prime Minister J. A. Lyons decided to return home through the steamy Red Sea rather than cross America, as he originally planned, and have to answer questions from American newspaper reporters about his attitude toward the Anglo-American treaty. Many observers here are saying that the Anglo-American treaty is dead until after the Australian elections, which will not come until late next fall.

The ears of State Department officials are closed to such pessimism. In the present juncture of affairs, they say, the value of an Anglo-American trade treaty is not economic at all, but political. What is the most frightening thing in the contemporary world? they ask. They answer themselves by saying that it is a retrogressive movement toward a nationalism that admits no rights and duties except in itself, chiefly exemplified in Germany and Italy, but slowly pulling all of eastern Europe into its ranks, and threatening Scandinavia. France has already signed one of Mr. Hull's reciprocal treaties; if England signs, there will be created a covenanted bloc of democratic powers to oppose the fascist world concept. This is no time, in short, to boggle over raisins.

It is with such idealistic aims in mind that Messrs. Roosevelt and Hull have undoubtedly been carrying on their con-

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versations with Mr. van Zeeland. It is a safe presumption that what they have wanted most to hear from him has been his opinion on whether a democratic, free-trading bloc, composed of America, England and France, will serve to turn the present trend in Europe, and drag back first the small European nations, and ultimately Germany and Italy, to economic safety. Mr. van Zeeland's answer is still unknown.

Last autumn in these Notes, it was reported that tentative discussions were being held among government officials and business men about the possibility of restoring the fascist countries to the world economic system by enlarging their potential foreign markets through tariff reductions and by granting them loans for the period of readjustment. Observers think that the problem is now markedly more difficult. One reason is that during the past winter both Germany and Italy have made large investments in plant and equipment to produce *ersatz* materials. Only a few weeks ago, Germany placed a 100-percent tariff on natural rubber, as a measure of protection for buna, the German substitute. The proceeds will be used to assist all industrial consumers of rubber to adapt their machinery to buna. In Italy, it is reported that during the last few months cotton and wool have become almost unobtainable for the domestic textile trade, "staple yarn," made from wood pulp, and "lanital," made from skimmed milk, taking their place.

Capital invested in these *ersatz* industries, it is pointed out, will be without value the moment Germany and Italy return to the Hull free-trade principles. No one in his senses would think of buying "staple yarn," or lanital, or the German vista, or buna, at any price, if he could get cotton, wool or rubber. Nor would anyone buy Germany's home-produced oil—in which great sums are supposed to have been invested—if he had access to the world markets. The *ersatz* development is simply perverse, from an economic point of view, and eventually must be written off as a dead loss.

A second factor to increase the difficulty of a world economic settlement is the reported distrust of German and Italian business men in their respective governments. Under a regime of freer trade, it is believed that not only the remaining monied Jews of Germany, but business men generally in both countries, would try to sneak out their capital to lands where the future seems less catastrophic. Neither the *ersatz* development, nor the possibility of a flight of capital, is in itself enough to make world economic peace hopeless. But since they are only two in a long list of adverse factors, it is taken for granted that Mr. van Zeeland will tell Messrs. Roosevelt and Hull that no easy solution is conceivable. There are observers here who think he would be justified in saying that no solution is conceivable until both Hitler and Mussolini are out of the way.

There has been no crueler episode in Washington, it seems to me, than the 1938 relief bill. For more than two months, the two million wretched relief families have not known from day to day what their future was; even now they must be in dreadful uncertainty. The chief blame must lie with the administration, which knows that within a few months it must bring in a general tax bill, and apparently feels that it cannot do so until it has first made a demonstration of cutting the relief budget. This is unquestionably why Mr. Hopkins' original request was for $1,500,000,000 instead of the $2,500,000,000 he should have asked for.

Quite as much blame lies with the reactionary Democratic Senators grouped behind Senator Byrnes of South Carolina, author of the provision under which local communities would be obligated to put up 40 percent as much money as the federal government. The provision was unworkable; there is every evidence it was offered in bad faith, with the single object of making it impossible for Mr. Hopkins to spend even the $1,500,000,000 allotted him. A small part of the blame lies with two-bit Representatives intent on pork in the form of roads and flood-control projects. It was supposed to be a rule here that human misery was not a proper subject for politics; a good part of the administration and about half of Congress ought to be, and I hope are, in contempt of the country. T. R. B.

Washington.

Other People's Money

Robert R. Young Becomes a Campaign Bookworm —The "Doctors" Again Dot the Campuses —Matthews as SEC Chairman

A GOOD deal of wickedly unfair construction has been put upon a very innocent operation. I speak of the criticisms made of the sale by Messrs. Farley and Roosevelt of campaign books autographed by the President himself. I refer more specifically to one purchaser of such books whose interest in political history has not yet been commented on.

Mr. Robert R. Young, one of the stockbrokers who recently bought from Mr. Ball, the fruit-jar tycoon of Middletown, control of the Midamerica Corporation which in turn controls the mess of properties left by the Van Sweringens, has suddenly developed an interest in the Democratic Party. On May 4 he bought fifteen copies of Mr. Farley's book with Mr. Roosevelt's autograph and paid $3,750 for them—$250 apiece. On May 30 he made an outright contribution to the party war-chest of $6,250, bringing his total kick-in to $10,000.

Now I am confident that certain dark-minded persons are going to attach some selfish motive to Mr. Young's expenditure. After all, why shouldn't Mr. Young buy fifteen copies of Mr. Farley's book, even though they did cost $250 each? Mr. Young's new Midamerica holding company must control about 150 corporations. Do you not think that corporations should know about our political history as well as anyone else? Mr. Young should have bought 150 copies of the great volume. As it is, if his corporation executives want to do some political reading each one of these books will have to be passed around to ten different corporations.

You may think $250 per book is a great deal. Also you may think $10,000 is a lot of money. But it doesn't amount to a penny a share on the shares of one of the Young holding companies.

Anyhow they say Mr. Young has been doing very nicely in Washington. Do you remember Mr. S. Clay Williams, who arrived in Washington in 1933 representing the tobacco trust and who said he would fight the labor provisions of the NRA all the way up to the Supreme Court and who ended by being the head of the NRA? How do

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you know Mr. Young may not wind up as a brain-truster or a member of the SEC? Didn't Mr. W. Averill Harriman, chairman of the Union Pacific, get to be first assistant administrator of the NRA? Didn't Mr. Earle Bailie get to be adviser of the Treasury? Didn't Mr. Myron Taylor get to be a member of the Industrial Advisory Council?

Of course this leaves unanswered the question of why Mr. Young bought the fifteen copies of Mr. Farley's $250 book and that only two days before he was summoned to the witness stand by the Senate to investigate his Midamerica operations, and why he sent Mr. Farley another $6,250 a few weeks later without so much as getting a book. But who solicited Mr. Young? It would be fun to know.

It has seemed a little like old times these last few weeks as the reports of the commencement exercises have come in. It is really difficult to doubt that we are getting back to normalcy. For there has peeped up through the crust of the badly eroded surface of society one of the pet plants of the era of normalcy. I mean the ever blooming LL.D. This dubious degree had fallen into disrepute. First of all, the learned suet magnates and utility kings were no longer able to give. Moreover, it was a little dangerous to select one of them for such an honor because there was always a chance that he might be kept away from the commencement exercises by an investigating committee or a bankruptcy court or even a federal jury. But apparently the skies have cleared and the learned "doctors" are again arrayed in the academic gowns. New York University has honored Dr. Cornelius Bliss and Dr. Jesse Jones. Temple has given her degree to Dr. Henry L. Doherty and Union has conferred the doctorate upon the eminent Dr. Winthrop W. Aldrich, while Mr. E. R. Stettinius Jr. of J. P. Morgan and Company has been delivering the baccalaureate bromide at Virginia. These are merely samples of the returning good times. Things may be sufficiently recovered next year to hand out some degrees to stockbrokers.

Speaking of stockbrokers, these gentlemen have been very much concerned about what may happen to them when their friend, Commissioner James Landis, leaves them for Harvard. Who will be the chairman of the SEC? They have their ideas on this subject and I am sure the President will be glad to listen to them. Wall Street's idea of a perfectly swell successor to Landis would be Commissioner Matthews. In fact there is some reason to believe that Mr. Landis is grooming Mr. Matthews for that job. He recently had Matthews made "vice-chairman" of the Commission, an office, by the way, which Mr. Landis improvised for the purpose.

Matthews came to the SEC from Wisconsin. Because Wisconsin is under the dominion of the La Follettes and Matthews had been a security commissioner there, the notion got around that he was a progressive. But Matthews fooled people. He turned out, and that without delay, to be the "soundest" member of the Commission. He can be depended on to be on the conservative side of every question. And if the President falls for making Matthews chairman of that Commission, we might as well fold up the SEC and throw it into the ash can. Making Matthews chairman would be a fitting close to Landis' career on the Commission.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

In Mournful Numbers

IT'S WONDERFUL how the movies can make available such priceless antics as the Marx brothers'; but it is getting clearer that the use of an entire film to frame a few splitting comedy sequences is simply a road to nowhere. Out of "A Day at the Races" I got some ripe laughs, but they were a long time in coming and when there wasn't a laugh there was nothing—ham dialogue, a ham plot and cast, no belief or interest anywhere. The W. C. Fields-Mae West-Jimmy Durante-etc. type of film has been going the same way for a long time. I'd run a mile to see any one of these people in a walk-on, but when as performers they become more important than the script, direction and film total, they defeat the film and themselves in it.

The idea in this latest picture is good—Groucho as the horse doctor called in to save the sanitarium and finally engineering success on the race track—but the picture treatment shows just about as little imagination as you can have and live. The stuff with Groucho as head surgeon and overworked lover is fine, and all three boys go through a fantastic sequence in the examination room and high jinks at the race tracks that no one else in the world is capable of. Otherwise there was a little scattered fun (Groucho's rhumba I remember well), and pouf pouf. Only the box office and time, apparently, can teach them that the same harp act, the same doubtful piano from Chico will never be missed; that a sequence of which the high comic point is pronouncing the name Hackenbusch "Hack-in-a-puss" may get a nervous laugh response from small towns on a try-out but hardly adds to the world's humor; and that a wastebasket of show tricks perched on such a rickety pretense at plot construction is not a picture and gets less so every day. The dizzy pace of the Marxes at their peak might never be held in any story or treatment, but I wish to God they would for once cast around for a good comedy director and some crazy writing team who might in time cook up something really worth their terrific energy and talent.

In matching "The Road Back" against "All Quiet on the Western Front"—related books by the same author, filmed by the same company (Universal)—a whole volume could be written on the subject of the rare peaks and awful valleys of the country called Hollywood, and how they exist side by side or hindside-before in time, and how those who are angry with the movies will never lack for ammunition (for the bad shows are truly frightful, though fortunately they pass quickly away), and how those who like to fire a hat up into the sky now and then will have their ammunition too (for the notable ones are the good ones, and will be with us a while). But on "The Road Back" there will be no volume written here. Too dispiriting.

"All Quiet" was a better subject for camera treatment, of course, the drama of it unmistakable and mounting—whereas the drama of the sequel is inward and widely social, thus difficult. And certainly anyone given this cast of nearciphers (excepting Slim Summerville and Andy Devine, who shouldn't have been there anyway) has got two strikes on him before he even gets to the park. Yet Lewis Milestone finished that first picture over seven years ago, when sound was still a novelty and Hollywood a babe in arms

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at those foreign scenes where there is now a tradition of easy illusion; and you can see it today and marvel at the way that film, battered print and all, was built into a unit with all its devices showing a prophetic genius in their clear establishment of the mood called for, its elements of humor and terror and mortal trial perceived and laid down with the surety of foundations. But that was Lewis Milestone, just about the first of the modern film men.

The director-producer of "The Road Back" is James Whale, who can do both good work and bad. About the story, the moral, the meaning, I hardly know what to say. At first there is a bit of war, the soldiers with such clean faces, their parts learned so earnestly, their enunciation so cuh-lear. Then presently the Armistice is signed and this Road Back might as well be the path of a unit on the Chautauqua time, a little of everything and something for all. What with hollow speeches, quaint types, mob-scene choruses by The Company, a shabby burlesque of the German people's rebellion, tears as thick as buttermilk and Louise Fazenda and all, I do not know when confusion has been so confounded, the tremendous so tinny.

There are some funny moments, some drama is still evident in a few scenes, but there is so little story left, so much pulling back and forth between lines from the book and somebody's ad-libbed idea of a neat black-out, such a lack of direction to the whole and climax to the end, that I don't think even the Class audience they make a play for by road-showing the film will be taken in. Just for the record and an even perspective, I haven't been so bored and put out by such an extended treatment of a major theme since Broadway produced "Bury the Dead" and (before that) the old Acme imported "Hell on Earth."

The Harry C. Pearsons' "African Holiday" is one of the genuine camera explorations, this time in the magic land of East Africa. There is less slaughter and animal melodrama than usual; the Pearsons offer peaceful studies of the wildebeest, giraffe, hippo, alligator, lion and many other fascinations, including the rare okapi, the Masai and several such things never photographed before—which you are never allowed to forget for a second (while Mr. Pearson does the commentary with clarity and restraint, his voice becomes tedious in its ubiquity and occasional complaisance). But dim photography and editing and the substitution of a faint musical score for living sound effects remind you all over again that even the Honest Truth itself can be pretty tasteless stuff beside some of the better effects in pictorial illusion. On the same bill, for example (at the Filmarte in New York), there is a handsome job of exploring nearer home: RKO's short on the New York waterfront. The human element was left pretty much to a chance flip comment; but all the docks and ships and bridges, the contrasts, the magnificent and monstrous flow of life and commerce—all these things move on the screen and in the motion of their joined fragments convey a clear and total idea. And finally on the same bill there is perhaps ten minutes of "Easy Street," which represents Charlie Chaplin's explorations in the field of visual comedy—still quite fresh somehow, for that is the strangest region of all, always present for all to see, but never charted. It is the Marxes' land too, but they waste it now, sprinkling it in handfuls to the twelve-reel winds. OTIS FERGUSON.

The Bandwagon

The state's attorney's records show that up to mid-May in all Germany 160 Catholics were sentenced on charges of sexual misbehavior and abuse of children and feeble-minded persons. . . . In every instance the accused confessed before a court in public session. No one who failed to confess was allowed to appear for trial.—*From a news item from Germany, published in The New York Times.*

A probe into the background of supporters of birth control which was endorsed by many eminent physicians showed it has its origin in Soviet Russia and was financed and urged by this nation as a stalemate to America's birth rate, with the ultimate goal a lack of males for army service when Russia was ready to strike with force. When the plot was unmasked birth-control propaganda faded.—*From an editorial in The Lawrence, Mass., Sunday News.*

The whole world has stood still this week watching and taking part in the crowning of our King and Queen. Hardly anything else dared to happen.—*From The Sunday Times, London.*

At a luncheon before the parade Sir Walter Gilbey said that the Coronation procession owed its brilliant spectacle largely to the horses. "A more magnificent set of horses I have never seen in my life," said Sir Walter.—*From The Daily Mail, London.*

SOUTHERN DEMOCRAT

The revolt of the majority against those inhibitions which limit it in the interest of the minority, if successful, means the end of democracy.—*Thomas Lomax Hunter, writing in The Richmond, Va., Times-Dispatch.*

THE STAR-SPANGLED SOMETHING

Mrs. Simpson, bride-to-be of Mr. Edward Windsor, has given Baltimore, ever a city of grandeur and some haughtiness as things are in a city famous although it is not located on the main trade routes, considerable publicity of late for it was in the city that Francis Scott Key, imprisoned as he was on a British warship in the War of 1812, supposedly looked out of a porthole or something, saw the American flag still waving and then wrote "The Star Spangled Banner."—*Wade H. Lucas, book-reviewing in The Raleigh, N. C., Times.*

STARTING FROM THE BOTTOM

Harry F. Sinclair Jr., twenty-one-year-old son of the chairman of the Consolidated Oil Corporation who was elected yesterday a member of the board of directors, the executive committee and the finance committee of the corporation, "will make his way in the company on the same footing as any other employee," according to a statement by the elder Sinclair.—*From a New York dispatch published in The Philadelphia Enquirer.*

YOU-CAN'T-PRINT-THAT DEPARTMENT

Objections were raised today by the newspaper, Il Lavoro Fascista, to the use of quotations from Mussolini's speeches as motifs on women's print dresses.

"The Fascist war cry—A Noi—[Let's Go] was repeated

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several times," the paper said, "and in some cases was located on the dress, where, because of the association of ideas, it took on a meaning the least of which it can be said is that it was unexpected."—*A dispatch from Rome published in The New York Post.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic.—THE EDITORS.

A COMMUNICATION

Will America Stop Another War?

SIR: It is constantly stated, and I cannot dispute the statement, that any Englishman who urges the United States to enter any obligation, through the League of Nations or otherwise, to coöperate with other democratic nations in safeguarding the world against the peril of another war, is seeking to draw her away from a secure neutrality and to entangle her once more in the 1917 situation. This suspicion is natural, but is it sound?

Before stating my case, may I put in a few sentences of personal explanation? For more than fifty years I have been attached to America almost as closely as to my native land. My wife is American, and in numerous visits, extending over several years, I have met all sorts and conditions of men and formed many close and valued friendships. Though no foreigner can claim to "know" America, I have by personal contacts and by assiduous reading striven to learn all I can of her political, economic and other social institutions. All through my active life I have been more of an internationalist than a nationalist, and a persistent anti-imperialist. During the War I was associated with the unpopular minority who strove for a negotiated peace, and after the War helped to denounce the dictated peace.

Now to my argument. If, in the summer of 1914, Germany and Austria had known for certain that England would come in on the side of France and Russia, it is more than probable that this knowledge would have stopped the War. If, however, they had known that the United States would enter the War on the Allied side, there would certainly have been no war to enter. For though the potential fighting strength of the United States might not have been fully realized, the balance of power against a German victory would have been too great to be disregarded. The United States would not have fought either in 1914 or 1917, and her efforts and sacrifices would not have been incurred. This is as certain as anything in this uncertain world. But even had the madmen of 1914 brought in the United States, the War must have been brief and the victory earlier and less costly than was the case.

Now to turn to the present critical situation in Europe and Asia. The failure of the Great War to make the world safe for democracy, or safe in any other way, is self-evident. But should this failure to achieve the ideals of the peacemakers and their chief prophet, President Wilson, be deemed a sufficient reason for America to stand aloof from a coöperation of democratic countries (with or without Russia) in order to prevent another war? Let me put the issue as plainly as I can. The League of Nations, as it stands today, with only three of the seven great powers as faithful members, is not strong enough or confident enough to deal with a possible and not improbable aggressive policy of the three great fascist powers, Germany, Italy and Japan. For though France's southeastern allies, together with the Scandinavian states, might stand firm by a fighting league, it is pretty certain that other members, taking advantage of the loose meanings of the Covenant obligations, would abstain. This would by no means make a fascist victory certain, or even probable, but it would make it possible. Much would depend upon the unexplored, though highly acclaimed, military and air strength of Soviet Russia.

Is it necessary that the civilization of Europe, indeed of the world, should be exposed to such a peril? This need not happen on one condition, namely, that America would forbid its happening. This prohibition would be certainly effective, if it carried with it the now known strength of America. There could be no real risk of war, for the predominance of the anti-war nations would be too great and too evident. No fascist censorship or propaganda of falsehood could possibly conceal the fact, no military madness could dare to confront it. America would not be drawn into a war. Her firm announcement would prevent a war.

Even admitting that America could stand out of another world war and keep firmly to her principles of economic neutrality, is it too much to ask her to consider whether such a course of inaction is a true expression of her national good will and long-range interests? Would not the breakdown of Western civilization and the possible triumph of the Brutalitarian State mean some considerable damage to civilization and culture in America? I do not dwell upon the damage to her foreign trade, for virtual economic isolation might not be impossible for her. But the moral damages, the loss of social intercourse, the ruin of European democracy, and above all, the sense of spiritual loneliness in a world from which equal neighborhood has disappeared—these damages would surely weigh more heavily as people came to realize that a more public-spirited policy, based on a wider, longer estimate of nationalism, might have been embodied in an action, not of entanglement, but of friendly coöperation based on community of human interests.

Finally, I would appeal to what may be considered perhaps a lower motive, the sense of power. To hold power and not to use it is a waste: to hold power and not to use it well is a moral evil. America happens today to hold in her hands the fateful decision of peace or war, civilization or anarchy. If she uses that power, will she not realize a higher destiny than she could realize by a policy of national aloofness, based upon premises that are unobtainable?

I appeal to the politicians, the press and the public opinion of the United States to bring closer consideration to the question whether they desire to be responsible for the coming of another world war, and its ruinous aftermath, by their refusal to use the preventive powers they possess.

I am aware that the policy I advocate may meet constitutional difficulties. But would it not be possible for the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate, if it favored such a policy, to entrust the President with a special power applicable to the occasion should the necessity arise?

Hampstead, London, Eng. J. A. HOBSON.

[An editorial comment on Mr. Hobson's contribution appears elsewhere in this issue.—THE EDITORS.]

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CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Basso v. Mr. Whipple

SIR: After several weeks of reflection, since I wanted to avoid some of the pitfalls of anger, I am forced to the conclusion that Mr. T. K. Whipple's "Literature in the Doldrums" (April 21, 1937) contains some of the most exasperating positivism The New Republic has ever been privileged to print. Originally, to be honest, I did not know whether I objected to what Mr. Whipple was saying or the way he said it: now I know it is a mixture of both. Such phrases as "forlorn ghosts," "bankrupt and exhausted," "batlike cheeping," "pitiful fragments," stick in my craw. They belong, I submit, not to the vocabulary of criticism but to the vocabulary of critical snobbery. I agree with Mr. Whipple (as who doesn't, for the love of Mike?) that the older American writers he discusses have had their day. I also agree that shifting social forces have had something to do with their decline. I cannot agree, however, that we are privileged to look down our noses at them (which is one way of looking cock-eyed) and make patronizing phrases at their expense. All of which, I understand, can be waved away by saying that I place too much importance on politeness—even in criticism.

Politeness, however, has nothing to do with the way Mr. Whipple lays down his "law of literary history." This law, as the author of "Literature in the Doldrums" interprets it, contends that literary movements have a definite beginning, a well defined end, roughly corresponding to the historical divisions "The Augustan Era," "The Middle Ages," etc. Such divisions are arbitrary, man-made and oversimplified. They are helpful when one is theorizing, or making a point, but they overlook the essential fact that time (of which they are a part) doesn't come in sections like a link of sausages and can't be snipped off here and there. Literature, to have done with sausages, is nothing but one of the eddies in the stream of history and that stream doesn't stop every now and then to "see what the ruling forces are nowadays" and make a "fresh start."

Having reached the conclusion, by what I would call very doubtful reasoning, that we have to make a fresh start, Mr. Whipple then finds us, alas! in the doldrums. If Mr. Whipple thinks our literature is in the doldrums that is perfectly all right with me; but I do wish he had followed his conclusions through—because, if American literature *is* in the doldrums, it is a very swell thing for American literature. It is significant of the whole arbitrary tone of Mr. Whipple's article that he fails to mention a few essential and very important things about doldrums in order to prove his point. The doldrums, in the first place, are where hurricanes are born. The doldrums, in the second place, do not stay over the real geographic equator. They travel back and forth with the "heat equator," or the region of greatest heat. If American literature is in the doldrums, then (I am merely carrying Mr. Whipple's analogy to its ultimate conclusion) it is simply following the heat equator and getting up steam for a hurricane. Mr. Whipple might have said, still sticking to the doldrums image, that ordinary storms take place irregularly and on a small scale. Small bodies of heated air (which we could take to mean the early social anger of men like Dreiser and Lewis) are pushed upward by surrounding heavier air masses. In the doldrums, however, the process takes on larger and more dramatic proportions. The belt of air that becomes heated and expanded is so wide that it cannot be displaced or dissipated by small interchanges. The trade winds on either side of the doldrums (it takes no great imagination to see these winds as the Right and the Left) are naturally in opposition to each other, which tends to develop a whirl. Eventually a spiral of winds is built up. Result: hurricane. Hooray, then, for the doldrums! And if Mr. Whipple didn't want to come to the hooray conclusion, that is not the point. The point is that he should not have gotten into the doldrums to begin with—unless, of course, he was prepared to think his way through.

It is not my contention, moreover, that we should all hang on to our hats and wait for the big blow. I think the blow is coming but I am not going through all the mumbo-jumbo of trying to prove what is only a hunch. I simply wanted to voice my protest at what I thought was a cold, remote and lifeless essay written in a library: for no person, except one who writes in a library, would ever have made the statement that the thousands of lives broken by the depression were "negative and pathetic rather than tragic." What is tragedy, anyway? Is it something in a dictionary or is it something that happens to men and women?

Just one thing more. Mr. Whipple, in conclusion, having stated very positively what was wrong with American literature, stated just as positively what was needed to cure it—how to give it the "impetus" it needed to get out of the doldrums. It would have been different if Mr. Whipple said, or even implied, "This is what I think," "This is what I believe." He didn't, however. "This," he said, "is what I *know*." It is obvious, certainly, that nobody with such knowledge ought to hold back at a time like this. We must all look forward to Mr. Whipple's next book. Immortality, sir, is yours.

Pisgah Forest, N. C. HAMILTON BASSO.

SIR: From Mr. Basso's letter I judge that our canons of politeness differ rather in theory than in practice. Our real differences lie elsewhere. He likes criticism—other people's, anyhow—to be polite, warm, I suppose genial. I think that on occasion politeness had better be sacrificed, even to the point of "snobbery"; and when I see how an article that is "cold, remote and lifeless" can generate so much lasting heat, I wonder whether critical writing need itself be "hot"? But especially we differ as to the importance of honesty.

I wrote my article partly to praise our older American writers, because I think they are too often underestimated nowadays. Of them I said, besides other references to their enduring excellence, that "a period when each of a dozen or more people turns out some half-dozen books of permanent value is no mean period in any literature," and that "their very merits testify to the weight of history behind them." These words Mr. Basso interprets as "looking down my nose" and "making patronizing phrases at their expense."

This falsification may have been careless; the others look plainly deliberate. I said: "Isn't the decline and corruption of the middle class a somewhat limited theme [*viz.*, for the radical writers]? By nature it is negative, and pathetic rather than tragic; the struggle of people to keep things never much worth having; their sufferings because they cannot keep up appearances; or the rotting of personality in them if they prostitute themselves and prosper. And of course *only these phases* of the middle class interest the radicals." Out of this, Mr. Basso makes "the statement that the thousands of lives broken by the depression were 'negative and pathetic rather than tragic.'"

Again, according to Mr. Basso, I said: "This is what I *know*." I said nothing of the sort.

The differing values which Mr. Basso and I assign to intellectual honesty are related, evidently, to the differences in our critical codes. Mr. Basso, who seems to be the jesting Pilate of Pisgah Forest, is very skeptical about truth in general. When he says that he thinks a hurricane is brewing but that he is "not going through all the mumbo-jumbo of trying to prove what is only a hunch," he shows how all-pervasive is his doubt. Naturally, he hates "positivism," and wants criticism to consist of retailing personal impressions as charmingly as possible.

On the contrary, I do decidedly believe that truth is discoverable and that a lot of it has been discovered—that the process of getting evidence and thinking about it which Mr. Basso calls mumbo-jumbo is a critic's first duty. If a critic doesn't do his best to "see what the ruling forces are nowadays" that govern the flow of "the stream of history," what in heaven's name is he for? To turn from small things to great, suppose the men who wrote "A spectre is haunting Europe," had said "—but of course that's just our private hunch." Fortunately, they were not superior to the mumbo-jumbo, and the long hard work, of trying to prove their hunch.

Well—"a hurricane is brewing." Is this just a notion in somebody's mind, or is it a desperate situation in a desperate world?

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"My guess is, the dam's burst and the flood's coming, but I can't be bothered to find out, and I wouldn't want to be unpleasantly positive about it, or speak harshly to those who hold a different opinion." Frankly, aren't those who complain of "positivism" and "bias" in the year 1937 enough to drive anyone clear beyond patience and politeness? I think they're a menace, and I don't mind saying so.

Berkeley, Calif. T. K. WHIPPLE.

The Status of Federal Aid to the Schools

SIR: Obscured in the rush of more dramatic events has been the defeat by the House Education Committee of the Harrison-Black-Fletcher bill for $100,000,000 in federal aid to the schools. It has reached the Senate calendar but is conceded little chance this session. The President's economy message was the apparent pretext taken by the committee to push through its 12-5 rejection, but it remains true that the Education Committee is, as usual, weighted along sectarian lines.

It is difficult for most urbanites to realize that expenditures per pupil per year range from New York's $124 to Arkansas' $19.86, with the national average being $64.76. Yet if we assume that $60 is a defensible minimum, Mississippi would have to spend 181.8 percent of its tax resources to reach even that level.

Six other states would have to spend more than 100 percent of their tax incomes to come up to the $60 figure.

Other bills, with no chance even for consideration in committee, called for amounts up to $600,000,000. It could be used. The point is that pressure from the profession alone was unable to force even the hundred-million-dollar measure into the House, where, in view of the favorable attitude in the Senate, it would have some chance of passage.

Children and money don't coexist. We must get the money where the money is and spend it where the children are, despite the illogical set-up in the House Education Committee.

ARTHUR FLETCHER
Newark, N. J. (Not the Representative).

For Spanish Children

SIR: A few weeks ago, the United Youth Committee raised enough funds, partly through a fast, to establish the first American-given home for children in Spain. The funds were sufficient for a home for twenty children, which we named the Thomas Jefferson Home.

Word has just come that the renovation of the house chosen for the home is near completion. Photographs received show it is a beautiful ancient villa with shadowed vistas, plenty of play room, a small farm all ready for occupation. It is located high in the Catalonian hills, far from war regions.

But so great was the need that the authorities selected a home for sixty children instead of for the expected twenty; we must now attempt to fill the home by putting forty more children into it, in order to maintain it as an American home.

One thousand dollars is needed immediately to give these forty children refuge. It is only a very small fraction of those who need help. But it is a test of our solidarity with Spain. We must not fail to fill this need! We ask your readers to send contributions to the United Youth Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

NANCY BEDFORD-JONES, Executive Secretary.
New York City.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Recent articles by H. N. Brailsford draw comment from widely separated sources. Ramananda Chatterjee, editor of The Modern Review, Calcutta, India, praises the general tone of "Rebel India" in our issue of April 28 but raises two points of fact. Mr. Chatterjee says that not all minorities are given proper representation in federal and provincial legislatures, although some minorities, such as Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians, are overrepresented; and he thinks the provincial legislatures will meet some time within the next six months, in spite of their quarrels with the governors, because the law requires such meetings. . . . I. Persons, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, thinks that Mr. Brailsford's articles on Spain in our issues of June 9 and 16 show too much sympathy with the official Communist Party point of view and do not give proper weight to the Trotskyist and Anarchist factions.

A letter from Anne Powell, of the Federal Theatre Project, Chanin Building, New York City, urges playwrights to enter the drama contest which closes September 31, 1937. For the best play, preferably but not necessarily dealing with an American subject, written by anyone who has not had a commercially successful play produced, the Dramatists' Guild is offering a cash prize of $250 and the WPA Federal Theatre Project is guaranteeing a New York production with royalties at the rate of $50 per week for the duration of the run. . . . James P. Cooney, Maverick Road, Woodstock, New York, is planning a new magazine, The Phoenix, to carry on the principles and traditions of D. H. Lawrence and says he would like to hear from interested persons.

Max Raskin, Suite 1801, Mariner Building, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, tells us he has been appointed chairman of a national committee set up by the Socialist Party to aid the Basque refugee children and would welcome contributions from interested persons.

The Film and Photo League, 220 West Forty-second Street, New York City, informs us that it has completed a sound picture, "Getting Your Money's Worth," which was filmed with the help of Consumers' Union and describes methods of scientifically testing consumers' goods, and asks the aid of consumers' coöperatives, labor unions and other organizations in arranging showings of the film. . . . The Eastern Coöperative League says there is a need for properly trained managers of retail coöperative enterprises and calls attention to its management-training course to be held from July 11 to July 24 at Massachusetts State College, Amherst, Massachusetts.

Violet Rosenberg of the American Federation of Government Employees sends a protest against the termination on June 30 of the National Research Project on Reëmployment Opportunities and Recent Changes in Industrial Technique, which has been conducted since November, 1935. She urges that a protest against this action be made to the officials of the Works Progress Administration.

What's on the Air?

The official Spanish government station, after a period of silence for repair and overhaul, is back on the air with new call letters, EAR. The wave length, 31.65 meters in the short-wave band, remains the same. Regular news bulletins are broadcast in English every night from 7:30 to 7:45, and on Tuesday and Friday evenings Ralph Bates, English author, appears as special commentator on the news programs.

President Hutchins of the University of Chicago is chief speaker in the regular weekly Round Table program of the University faculty, Sunday, June 27, 12:30 to 1 P.M., NBC-Red Network.

Premier Paul van Zeeland of Belgium is guest of honor and chief speaker at a luncheon of the Foreign Policy Association. Monday, June 28, 2 to 2:30 P.M., NBC-Red Network.

Proceedings of the convention of the National Educational Association are described in a series of broadcasts over the NBC-Red Network. Florence Hale appears Saturday, June 26, 11 to 11:15 P.M.; President Orville C. Pratt of the NEA and Dr. Arthur E. Morgan of the TVA are heard Monday, June 28, 2:30 to 2:45 P.M.; the Antioch College Players present a dramatization of the life of Horace Mann, Tuesday, June 29, 2 to 2:30 P.M.; and Dr. Belmont Farley gives a final review, Wednesday, June 30, 6 to 6:15 P.M.

A special program for the national convention of the American Youth Congress is broadcast Saturday, July 3, 2:30 to 3 P.M., NBC-Red Network.

Outstanding musical and entertainment programs of the week include Bruno Walter conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Friday, June 25, 4:35 P.M., CBS; John Barrymore in the second of his new "streamlined Shakespeare" presentations, "Richard III," Monday, June 28, 9:30 to 10:15 P.M., NBC-Blue Network; and opera from the Cincinnati Summer Opera Association, Friday, July 2, 9 to 10 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

All times given are Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

The Usableness of Howells

IT LOOKS very much as if William Dean Howells were lucky in the timing of his centenary—luckier than some other writers whose names have cropped up for the same reason in the last half-dozen years, and certainly luckier than Howells himself was in rounding out his long career during those ten or fifteen years that preceded 1920. The whole disposition of criticism at the moment is immeasurably warmer and friendlier toward him than it was when, a year or so after the outbreak of the War in Europe, Howells himself could write to Henry James, with what painful feelings we can well imagine: "I am comparatively a dead cult with my statues cut down and the grass growing over them in the pale moonlight." There was almost no exaggeration in this melancholy remark, as anyone knows who can remember the distinguished obscurity in which he spent his last few years, or as anyone can now learn for himself by reading, for example, the essay which Mencken, with characteristic amenity and characteristic moderation, devoted to Howells and his work a year or two before his death. According to Mencken's view, the older man of letters was "an Agnes Repplier in pantaloons," "a contriver of pretty things," the author of "a long row of uninspired and hollow books, with no more ideas in them than so many volumes of The Ladies' Home Journal and no more deep and contagious feeling than so many reports of autopsies."

Judgments such as these, of course, have now taken their place among the curiosities of literary history, and the essay can be recommended only to those who want to be entertained by the spectacle of H. L. Mencken taxing Howells with "triviality" and "narrowness of vision." There is a Howells legend, however, a legend that was set in motion by Mencken's generation, and it has by no means even now been wholly discredited: the legend that represents him as merely a servile idolater at the shrine of Bostonian self-complacency; as a pander to the shallowest pruderies of the Brown Decades; as, at the best, a writer whose vision of human life was limited to the suburban horse-car, the summer colony and the front piazza. No one, I think, will now be tempted, in rejecting this caricature, to swing over to the opposite extreme and attribute to the author of "New Fortunes" the stature of a Stendhal or a Turgenev. But it is clear enough to the critical sense of this decade that, with all his deficiencies, Howells is one of the decisive figures in the development of our literary culture. The meaning of his career it is no longer possible to neglect or to belittle: he was the first of our important imaginative writers thoughtfully to consider and intelligently to comprehend what was happening to the form and quality of American life as it moved away from the simplicity, the social fluidity, the relative freedoms, of the mid-century toward the ugly disharmonies of monopolism and empire. He was the author of the first realistic novels of permanent interest in which the effects of that development are represented dramatically with any fullness or clarity.

Nothing could be less critical than to judge Howells simply in comparison with the severest and most powerful of his successors: his true achievement comes into focus not only when he is seen beside Dreiser or Dos Passos but when his work is set against that of his predecessors and contemporaries. What he left for Frank Norris and Jack London to do is no more important than what he did that Hawthorne and Melville, Simms and Cooke and Cable had left undone. Dreiser, in a later generation, was the creator of Cowperwood, true; but his portrait of that titanic financier was made possible partly because the creator of old Dryfoos had already, in his zeal for the cultivation of a sound realism among us, cast out the old Jacksonian and romantic illusions and faced all the implications of the fact that "business," as he said, "is the national ideal, and the successful business man is the American type." In the growing realization of this—for it had once been hoped, of course, that the farmer or the professional man would dominate the life of the republic—Howells had made a scrupulous study of the old-fashioned business man at his best in his portrait of Silas Lapham.[1] But even in that novel, in the figures of Lapham's competitors, he had more than hinted that the pace was no longer being set by men like the old paint-manufacturer; and in later novels he proceeded to call into being a series of more typical money-makers—the coarsely avaricious and boorish Dryfoos of "A Hazard of New Fortunes," the tight-fisted, pettily tyrannical Gerrish of "Annie Kilburn," the thievish and cowardly Northwick of "The Quality of Mercy," and the unpitying sensualist Langbrith of "The Son of Royal Langbrith." With these personae in mind, can we believe that Howells was expressing no private emotion when he allowed his old Socialist, Lindau, to rage against "this oligarchy of traders and tricksters, this aristocracy of railroad wreckers and stock gamblers and . . . mill-serf owners"?

It is too much to suppose so, though in his own person he habitually spoke more mildly. He believed as profoundly as any American writer has ever believed in the principle of equality, and he discerned as plainly as any later writer—as Upton Sinclair, let us say—that the sure effect of the business man's economy was "to establish insuperable inequalities" among us. No other native writer of his time was so constantly preoccupied with the question of class, and no other watched so responsibly or so anxiously the sharpening of class lines and the stiffening of class barriers in the world about him. In his earlier work, in such books as "A Chance Acquaintance" and "The Lady of the Aroostook," he had made the contrasts between social groups, in an ostensibly democratic order, the object of a lightly ironic or genially comic treatment, though even in such books one can sometimes detect the rumbling of more tragic undertones. The rumbling becomes easily audible in "A Woman's Reason," of the early eighties—with its treatment of a young woman's descent, temporary though it is, from her own leisure class to that of the wage-earners—and in "The Minister's Charge" and "Annie Kilburn," which belong to the years of the Haymarket trials, that gloomy sound has drowned out most other noises. The "apprenticeship," in the first of these, that the country boy Lemuel Barker undergoes is a course of sprouts in the drawing of class lines with the hardness and the finality with which city people, as he discovers, know how to draw them. Howells' picture, in "Annie Kilburn," of life in a small New England mill town that is also a summer resort of the well-to-do, may be touched with some of the gentler ironies; but the grave theme of the book—the harshness of class distinctions in

[1] The Rise of Silas Lapham, by William D. Howells. Centenary Edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

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such a community and the hopelessness of extending any true good will or fellow feeling above them—was broached in it for the first time by a major American realist.

In his love of genuine equality, Howells, like his friend Mark Twain, simply preserved and expressed the finest social feelings of the old Middle Western life of the forties and fifties: his father before him had been a courageous champion of equal rights and political freedom. Unlike Mark Twain, however, Howells came to see that there was a real clash between freedom as Americans had largely conceived it—freedom to pile up money and to sweat other men—and the equality he so passionately desired; and he came also to see that a merely political equality is a tricky and superficial thing. Such insights make an essential difference in all the fiction he wrote after "Silas Lapham," but they are of course most explicitly given out in his two Utopian novels and in some of those fugitive essays on social matters which it would now seem to be high time for someone to collect and reprint in a volume. "Freedom," he wrote in one of them, "is only occasionally a political affair, a civic affair: it is constantly a social affair, a pecuniary affair, an economic affair. Liberty and poverty are incompatible, and, if the poverty is extreme, liberty is impossible to it." He was no less realistic, no less free from the older delusions, in his view of equality. "Economic equality," he said in a different essay, "is the mother of all other equalities."

These propositions may be commonplaces today; they were anything but commonplaces to old-fashioned Americans in Howells' time, and they were not embodied in painstaking narratives by other writers until he had shown the way. For of course it is not simply a question of Howells' having arrived intellectually at certain political convictions as a result of fusing his inherited social values with the results of his observation and reading. It is a question of imaginative understanding, of fresh ethical and social perceptions; and on that ground Howells did much to make possible a new orientation for American fiction in its sober rendering of American life. If such later writers as Dos Passos have based a series of novels on their sense that the world about them is a planless and wasteful chaos, they were worthily anticipated by the man who made Basil March, one of his most transparent fictional spokesmen, denounce "this economic chance-world in which we live"; who made another character speak of "the squalid struggle which is the plutocratic conception of life"; and who, in "The World of Chance," gave over a whole novel to the deliberate representation of a way of life dominated not by purpose and control but by accident, hazard and whim. The "formlessness" for which Howells has often been reproached, and which this book exemplifies, is as little a defect as the formlessness, so-called, of "1919." He had the astuteness to see that a disordered world cannot be shadowed forth in the well made fictions that may do justice to a small and harmonious scene.

He cared for order, for fraternity, for union, as deeply as he cared for equality, and he cared at least as much for a genuine individualism. But he saw that a rich personal development not only is not fostered but is actively and tragically frustrated by the egotism and the self-interest that are the ruling motives in an individualistic society. It was Howells' Altrurian, and not some later critic, who, describing in "Through the Eye of the Needle" the Americans of the turn of the century, uttered that phrase about "their warped and stunted and perverted lives," and certainly few writers have ever realized so keenly what happened to the old dogmas of self-help and self-cultivation by the time the triumph of industry had taken its toll of them. Again, it was a young New England farmer in "A Traveler from Altruria," not one of Anderson's characters, who was perhaps the first to say plainly: "If you want to see American individuality, the real, simon-pure article, you ought to go down to one of our big factory towns, and look at the mill-hands coming home in droves after a day's work, young girls and old women, boys and men, all fluffed over with cotton, and so dead-tired that they can hardly walk. They come shambling along with all the individuality of a flock of sheep." Of course it was in the nature of the case that Howells made relatively little, in fiction, of the terrible sacrifice of personal wholeness among the industrial workers; but who can fail to discern, in so many of his middle-class characters, restless or ill occupied or discontented or self-seeking men and women that they are, his implicit criticism of an egocentric culture?

It is true that his criticism remained within certain limits that later writers have fortunately overleapt; it did so, too, partly because of that excessive and essentially unwholesome fastidiousness of which so much has been made, and which in fact was almost as heavy a handicap, for a serious realist, as some critics have taken it to be. Even more fundamental, though less damaging in practice, was the fact that he never broke entirely with the Swedenborgian mysticism on which he had been brought up or with the foggy idealism of the Transcendentalist epigoni he lived among: the remark by one of his characters that our prejudice against crime and injustice comes "from somewhere outside of what we call Nature" points straight at the philosophically shaky basis of his realism. It was the basis, however, on which Howells was bound to write, given the circumstances; and if it qualifies, it does not at all undermine the extraordinary interest of his work for us, or keep it from being "usable" in a sense in which the work of no one of his contemporaries quite is. Its vitality is more evident, at the moment of his centenary, than it has ever been before.

NEWTON ARVIN.

Eye-Opener

Before I Forget, by Burton Rascoe. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 461 pages. $3.

THE FIRST instalment of Burton Rascoe's autobiography, which carries the author from a small-town Kentucky childhood up to the time when he got fired as literary editor of The Chicago Tribune for insulting the works of Mrs. Mary Baker G. Eddy, is an eager, quivering, engrossing document. It is, in fact, filled with such tremendous gusto that a reader who is unused to the vital Rascoe idiom might get the idea that the hero of the story is Gargantua, Lionel Strongfort, Leonardo da Vinci, Brann the Iconoclast, Robert Ingersoll, Frank Merriwell, Amory Blaine, Jesse Livermore, Tom the Bootblack and Joe Gould all somehow miraculously stuffed inside the hide of a cocky bantamweight who is frequently slapped to the canvas but never, no, never put away for the count. In his Shawnee, Oklahoma, high-school days Burton doubled in brass and everything else; he made football, baseball, basketball and track teams while, at the same time, earning his living by running a paper route, writing literary papers for clubwomen, doing editorials and reporting for The Shawnee Herald, and acting as assistant librarian at the Carnegie Public Library; while, again at the same time, learning Greek from Milt, Gus and Harry Pappathakos, Shawnee restaurateurs; while, still at the same time, picking up Latin at the knees of a dipsomaniacal editorial writer

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and a Catholic priest; while, still again at the same time, learning about women from several school teachers and from Lillian the silent and Chloe the loquacious; while, once more at the same time, reading Emerson, Boswell, the Bohn classics, Haeckel, Maeterlinck's "The Life of the Bee," Victor Hugo, Plutarch, the Upanishads, Juvenal, Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," Ibsen, Shaw, Mencken on Nietzsche, Thomas à Kempis, Swift, Cellini, Sophocles and God-knows-what; while, still in the same years, writing poems and tragedies in blank verse; while—but by this time Burton is shifting his scene and plunging (simultaneously, of course) into contemporary European literature, life at the University of Chicago, marriage to charming Hazel Luke, and newspaper work for The Chicago Tribune, on which publication (it was not yet a rag) he was everything (again simultaneously) from rotogravure make-up editor to military expert and book reviewer.

Actually, there is nothing incredible to Burton's story. He simply had a little more energy and a great deal more curiosity than the next person. It is his way of telling the story—higgledy-piggledy, pell-mell, hurry-schmurry—that makes it seem like the act of a juggler keeping five balls and a couple of chairs in the air at one time. Rascoe has a crackling verve. If you discount the chronological inconsecutiveness and the card-trick manner of his book you will discover that it has a number of solid virtues. Rascoe has conjured up a first-rate picture of life in a somnolent Kentucky border town of the days just before the automobile. He has disproved the contention that post-frontier life is necessarily inimical to culture (he discovered the Bhagavid-Gita, Walter Pater and the disgusting stomp dances of the Kickapoo Indians in Oklahoma at the same time). His Chicago sections provide another important chapter for the story of the death of the Genteel Tradition. And his sketches of people—of Joseph Medill Patterson, once publisher of The Chicago Tribune and now publisher of The New York Daily News; of Bert Leston Taylor, Percy Hammond, Carl Sandburg, Sherwood Anderson and other figures who once made culture hum in the midlands without knowing it; of Max Annenberg, strong-arm circulation builder—these are (to use a Rascoe word) percipient, the sketches of a man who combines a tendency to caricature with the shrewdest sort of an eye for personal foibles and distinction.

Burton doesn't claim very much for himself. He gives Francis Hackett and Floyd Dell the credit for making the book page a Chicago institution. He doesn't claim to have "discovered" anybody; he merely fought for things that seemed good to him. He put Cabell on the map in Chicago, but he admits it was John S. Sumner who sold Cabell to the American public. He liked Fitzgerald's "This Side of Paradise" immediately; but so did John V. A. Weaver and other reviewers, as he is careful to explain. If Rascoe did anything to promote the influence and the sales of Dreiser you will look in vain for evidence of it in "Before I Forget." In fact, Burton is entirely too modest about his role as a literary journalist in a period when the United States stood in egregious need of the curiosity-cum-enthusiasm of literary journalists who loved the lusty in letters. The counts against Rascoe—that he overestimated people like Cabell and Hergesheimer, that he is sometimes inaccurate and occasionally downright unjust—do not seem to be very important when we consider that without him, without Francis Hackett, Mencken, Dell and others, books would have meant much less than they did to those who came of age in the 1920's. Rascoe may not have been a systematic critic in the European tradition. But when men are blind they don't need systematic critics. They need eye-openers like Burton Rascoe.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN.

"Raskolnik"

The Meaning of History, by Nicholas Berdyaev. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 234 pages. $3.

OF THE few eminent Russians who in exile have retained their pre-revolutionary fame and energy, Nicolas Berdyaev is perhaps the only one to whom exile has brought international renown and an enlargement of his powers. Much of this renown is shrouded in legend, for Berdyaev, one of the most fervent mystics alive, has had the curious distinction of lecturing, as an uncompromising supernaturalist, at a Bolshevik university. Born in 1874, Berdyaev was famous in his twenties as a religious teacher, and caused a furor when he allied himself with the Russian Social Democracy. At twenty-five he was exiled from Kiev, his native city, to the north, and early in 1917 was again threatened with banishment for having criticized the Governing Synod of the Orthodox Church as a political body at the mercy of the civil power. Despite his political activity, Berdyaev was never a materialist; his first mentor was Schopenhauer and, after him, Fichte and Kant; even as a Marxist his associations were with a group "who were undergoing a spiritual crisis." After the Revolution he was appointed to the Chair of Philosophy at the University of Moscow, but after a time was removed from his post and expelled from the country in 1922. He lived for a time in Berlin and then moved on to Paris, where he now directs the Academy of the Philosophy of Religion which he founded in Berlin and a review entitled Putj (The Way).

The immediate importance of the volume under review is that it consists of the material which Berdyaev used for his lectures at the Liberal Academy of Spiritual Culture in Moscow, between 1919 and 1920. I would not recommend it to anyone seeking a first acquaintance with Berdyaev, for it is one of his weakest and most repetitive books, but it is interesting as a statement of the philosophy which Berdyaev was to elaborate in books like "The End of Our Time" and "Freedom and the Spirit." History, he says over and over again, can be understood only in the light of man's efforts to reach God; the periods of history form a pattern of spiritual aspiration or defeat or denial: "the philosophy of history—of historical knowledge—is one of the ways to the knowledge of spiritual reality. It is the science of the spirit bringing us into communion with the mysteries of spiritual life."

Like every other book of Berdyaev's that I have read, "The Meaning of History" is written in the inclusive language of mysticism. I do not know what most people will make of a generalization like "History is the result of a deep interaction between eternity and time; it is the incessant eruption of eternity into time," but it is comparatively intelligible if considered in terms of Berdyaev's fluent and consistent philosophy of God-intoxication. "When a logical proof is demanded in matters of spiritual faith," he wrote in "Freedom and the Spirit," "then faith is dragged down to the lowest level of spiritual unity." Berdyaev is a theologian in the style, and with the passion, of Plotinus, Jakob Boehme, St. John of the Cross; he is to be placed along with those who, unlike Pascal, have tried to express themselves in the very spirit of their revelation. The difference between him and the great mystics is that he has tried to use his visionary insights as an instrument of analysis; he was a sociologist in "The Bourgeois Mind," a literary critic in "Dostoevsky," a political scientist in "The Russian Revolution," a formal theologist in "Freedom and the Spirit."

From his first work, "Subjectivism and Individualism in Social Philosophy," however, Berdyaev has been urged by

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another preoccupation: the criticism, along supernatural and moral lines, of Marxism. There are times when, in reading Berdyaev, one feels that it has a repulsive fascination for him, a fascination which he cannot dispel, and to which he hearkens back time and time again. For him Marxism is evil incarnate, anti-christ, but it is evil to which he has yielded. "We must not shrink from the truth," he wrote in "The Bourgeois Mind," "we must admit that there is something in what Marx and Marxists say about religion and Christianity. Class greed and class falsehood have been mixed up with the religious life of human societies. Religion has often been used to justify the oppression of man by man." He goes on, of course, as usual, to flay Marxism, but always with unnatural bitterness. It is not for nothing that so many Russian traditionalists view Berdyaev with suspicion to this day; he has openly criticized the monarchists, he still has a palpable contempt for the Orthodox Church, and has even dedicated his most violent attack on Marxism, "Christianity and Class War," to "the memory of Karl Marx, who was the social master of my youth, and whose opponent in ideas I have now become."

It was in this work that Berdyaev affirmed his belief in the theory of class struggle, but chiefly in metaphysical terms. It is true that one class exploits another, he said, but this only reflects on a material plane what occurs on the spiritual. The real class war is between values. To be bourgeois, he wrote in "The Bourgeois Mind," "is neither a social nor an economic condition, yet it is something more than a psychological and ethical one," and then identified the bourgeois spirit with materialism. Communism, therefore, because it had only material ends in mind, was distinctively bourgeois, and not proletarian at all: "its adepts definitely profess the religion of earthly might, earthly power, earthly happiness. The bourgeois always hungers after the first places, loves 'position,' and when he secures it his self-satisfaction is boundless."

Berdyaev, it becomes evident to anyone who reads him at some length, cannot be criticized as one would criticize an anti-intellectualist, say, like Pareto or Spengler. Properly speaking, he is not a social thinker at all, for human conduct is only a parable to him, and it is with some uneasiness that one applies the values of this world to one so patently absorbed in the next. Writing of his critics in "The End of Our Time," he explained that his thought is often misinterpreted because "attempt is made to bring it into line with such and such a direction of modern thought. This is an essentially wrong way of considering it. The very substance of my philosophy is to have nothing at all to do with the thought of times which, so far as I am concerned, are over and done with. I look to the thought of a world which is to begin the world of the new middle ages."

And that, it might be added, is just his tragedy. At a time when the greatest religious thinkers in the world are turning their attention to society, when even a Jacques Maritain can write a book about "the modern world," Berdyaev has enclosed himself in obscurity and bigotry. He has been taken up by various groups of political reaction, but never with any great success, for the truth is that he has always been, and remains, a *raskolnik,* a heretic in revolt against the faith of others, and the champion of his own. Berdyaev today occupies a world all his own, without a church, without leadership and without compulsions that men can follow. To read him, I think, is to read the last, and in some respects the most passionate, avowal of pure faith that men may read at the present stage of religious belief: "I recognize that there is something essential which I cannot put into words, and that I cannot adequately develop my innermost thoughts."

ALFRED KAZIN.

Pomp and Circumstance

The Magic of Monarchy, by Kingsley Martin. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 125 pages. $1.25.

IF YOU have been feeling that nothing more could possibly be added to the public discussion of what the English call their constitutional crisis and the Americans refer to as King Edward's enforced abdication, or more simply as just "Eddy and Wally," take a look at Mr. Martin's little book. He is the editor of The New Statesman (London) which comes close to being The New Republic's opposite number in Great Britain. He is not blinded by the glitter of the crown, though his attitude toward it is completely British.

Though he gives us no backstairs gossip (of which there has been too much already) Mr. Martin does bring the happenings of last autumn into a perspective that is fresh for most of his American readers. He points out that the hysterical worship of the monarchy is something new in English life; it began with Queen Victoria (pushed along by Disraeli) and has been getting worse ever since. This is partly the desire of the masses for a father image, partly a compensating adjustment as the crown has less and less to do with political affairs, partly the deliberate creation of England's real rulers, who find it suits their purposes, and are skillfully aided by the press lords with their big-circulation newspapers.

Mr. Martin thinks the British people ought to be more sensible about the monarchy, without offering much hope that this will happen. He believes that Edward might not have stayed on the throne very long in any case, since it was important to the government to have a manageable monarch, and that the affair of Mrs. Simpson provided a convenient excuse. I should have welcomed a fuller discussion of the parts played by Mr. Baldwin and, above all, by the Archbishop of Canterbury. However, I admit I probably shouldn't be satisfied with anything written by Mr. Martin or anyone else—about the Archbishop in particular—that could be sent through the mail.

B. B.

Meet the States

The Road: In Search of America, by Nathan Asch. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 271 pages. $2.75.

THERE are many ways of seeing the face of this country, and Nathan Asch's is as good as any, better than most, though he is inevitably the reporter with a book to write. Anyway, he knows New York is just a post-office address for writers and other busy types, and he gets a feeling of these fields, hills, rivers and all the states and railway networks, the diners on the road with trucks and the long buses pulling out from their circle of light and gunning it off down the pike, and little tinny radios at four-corner places, the mines and offices and cramped domestic scenes. He feels the way the term Nationwide must make us all feel at times, knowing that the tens of millions we can never see for the wide plains and million cities are listening, repeating the same joke, laughing at Jack Benny and tuning in Benny Goodman, seeing the ads and playing the pin-ball games and reading the same words in the papers after supper, looking up from them toward Washington or Europe or Hollywood.

But a city or a crossroads is made up of its glittering ones, smug ones, hopeless ones. And Asch will say

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"I looked in vain for Dallas until—" and having seen half the people in Dallas he "finds" the spirit of that city in a broken-down tart. He falls into an error of opposites: where the rotogravures report from Miami only sun-tan and society, Asch would lean over backward to see only the terrified Negro, the dishwasher with a sore. Whereas America is always all of its people, and Miami is both a splendid and a fearsome place.

He wanted to see the way Americans live, though; his book could come after. And so he got on a bus and went the southern way to the Coast, coming back the northerly way. He knocked around in oil fields and sharecroppers' country, general stores and cheap hotels, dance halls, mines, lumber camps, union headquarters and newspaper offices, looking, talking, asking, drinking a beer with the folks. He knew before he was half-done that there is no such thing as a reasoned survey possible, that a thing like a country may be lived in or theorized about but that in the end it must remain as near and everywhere and inscrutable as the heavens. These fragments from memory that run so smoothly and matter-of-fact (Asch is a writing writer as opposed to the heap-big-talk writers) are both an admission of failure to "find" America and a good introduction to its countryside, with cataloguing suppressed and statistics implied, a one-man show of revealing pictures.

OTIS FERGUSON.

First Quarter

The East Wind, by Compton Mackenzie. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. $2.75.

FOR A long time now Compton Mackenzie has been writing nothing but pot-boilers, some of them sharp and lively and others coming close to a pot-boiling dullness that is somehow less objectionable than pretentious dullness. At present he is trying to tie his career together and crown it with a work somewhat in the manner of the serious novels he wrote before 1920, but even more ambitious in length and subject matter. "The Four Winds of Love" will carry its hero, John Ogilvie, through various phases of British life in the first three decades of this century; for this, four volumes will be needed.

The first of these, "The East Wind," has just been published. It covers John's eighteenth and nineteenth years (1900-01), with the opening scenes at the same school, among some of the same people, as the opening scenes of "Sinister Street" (is the intenser sex life of the boys in this book a deepening of the earlier material, or just an admission that 1937 is franker than 1914?). As the story proceeds it becomes apparent that it is meant to have great scope, philosophical, political and romantic, with the romantic naturally of the greatest importance. John goes through the usual love affairs of early youth; two girls apparently in love with him desert abruptly to older men who can offer marriage.

Mackenzie writes of it all as deftly as he did twenty years ago, and perhaps a bit too deftly. The last "wind" of this book is a wise and beautiful Jewess with a son almost John's age who, like his mother, is in love with John. As this volume ends John is about to leave for Oxford when he hears a symphonic poem of Sibelius' which in its northern invocation has a hint of prophecy that the fourth wind will find John in his ancestral Scotland where a fabulously old kinsman he met by accident urged him to settle. (*Cf.* Auden's "The Orators": ". . . in Scotland they say That Compton Mackenzie will be king one day.") But first the south and west winds must be met and there are other forces which will develop. Among John's young friends are a future Irish revolutionary and (the Jewess' two sons) a potential communist and a musical genius. These characters are effectively realized though some of the minor people are dummies moved by wires; and a good part of the writing is regrettably facile. Two things save "East Wind" from being just an attempt to recapture the first fine Georgian rapture—it is a good build-up for the volumes to come, and the discussions presenting various attitudes on imperialism, Home Rule, Catholicism, etc. (even the pollen of socialism can be faintly seen in the wind), show the period in perspective. It is of course too early to predict the total effect and value of the tetralogy, but it is safe to guess that it will be good reading.

HARRY THORNTON MOORE.

American Science

Famous American Men of Science, by J. G. Crowther. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 414 pages, illustrated. $3.50.

THIS BOOK will be good news to those who enjoyed the author's previous volumes on British men of science and on the scientific renaissance in the Soviet Union. Mr. Crowther is not only one of the ablest scientific writers of the day but also a persuasive and outspoken champion of the attitude that regards every "specialized" activity of man, from the writing of a poem to the forging of a new mathematical instrument, as dynamically interwoven with the general patterns of society.

From the long roll of American men of science he has chosen four who, in sharply contrasting ways, illustrate his thesis that the progress of science, far from being "accidental," closely parallels the curve of social developments. That Benjamin Franklin should head such a list is inevitable, for seldom in any country has there appeared a genius so intimately linked with the most significant intellectual and material movements of his time. Mr. Crowther, although lacking in literary airs and graces, has succeeded in organizing an unwieldy mass of biographical material from which there emerges a portrait of Franklin as a supremely "modern" mind, laboring in a thousand ways to harness the newly discovered forces of nature to the destinies of a new and enormously well endowed country. His astonishing versatility epitomized the vigor of pioneers who literally had a world to gain; he could turn from sharp criticism of a Constitution inspired by native plutocrats to scientific investigations in what are today half a dozen separate sciences.

The original electro-magnetic researches of Joseph Henry do much to illuminate the history of modern communications, while the account of the origins and purposes of the Smithsonian Institution is of high interest. Of even greater value, however, is the account of the life and work of Josiah Willard Gibbs, one of the greatest scientists America has produced. A perfect representative of New England austerity and detachment at its best, Gibbs nevertheless accomplished his greatest work in the intensely practical fields of thermo-dynamics and the chemistry of heterogeneous substances. The final essay on Thomas Alva Edison provides Mr. Crowther with an excellent opportunity to warn against the dangers of drawing a hard-and-fast line between the work of the "creative" scientist and that of the shrewd, tireless, frequently naïve but always earth-minded inventor of whom Edison was—and remains —the archetype.

HAROLD WARD.

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New Books: A Reader's List

STAR BEGOTTEN, by H. G. Wells (Viking; $1.75). Another of Wells's excursions into prophecy, served up this time with cosmic rays from Mars. The characters ring true even though they only exist as mouthpieces of wishful thinking; the Utopia is serene and well ordered; the directions for reaching it are fuzzy. Less fantastic, and therefore less exciting and incredible, than Wells's earlier books.

THE LIFE OF RILEY, by Harvey Fergusson (Knopf; $2). The latest specimen in Harvey Fergusson's collection of Americana. The locale is Southwestern; but Riley, born in the boom and saloon period and, like other fine intelligent animals, unable to master his fate in unfamiliar circumstances, has counterparts all over the country. The story of a masculine man who thought through his emotions to confused acceptance: "Some slight perception he had achieved of the nature of individual destiny, which is always a defeat, always an ordeal, sustained by some felt allegiance, forever indefinable, to ends beyond its own." As sensitively observed and compassionately portrayed as Mr. Fergusson's other subjects.

I ASKED NO OTHER THING, by Cora Jarrett (Farrar and Rinehart; $2.50). Selections from Mrs. Jarrett's book of short stories, published in 1929, with some additions. Dramatic studies in cruelty, irony, renunciation and simplicity—copper-plate sketches by a skilled artisan.

THE JOPPA DOOR, by Hope Williams Sykes (Putnam; $2.50). The story of Katharina Thiel, whose life was a series of adjustments to the places where first her family, and then her fanatic husband, sought the fulfilment of their religious urges. A quietly interesting chronicle of the forging of a character—during early years of servile work in Germany, life and courtship in Jerusalem, and holding her humble own in the raw pioneer days of Mormon Utah—which might have been stronger with less obvious simplicity.

Contributors

JONATHAN MITCHELL, who is well known to readers of The New Republic for his many articles on politics and national affairs, lives in Washington, D. C.

EDMUND WILSON'S latest book, "This Room and This Gin and These Sandwiches," a volume of three plays dealing with the post-war artistic revolt in Greenwich Village, has just been published as one of The New Republic Dollar Series.

DAVID GRENE, a member of the Classics Department at Trinity College, Dublin, is now visiting lecturer at Harvard University.

HENRY C. WOLFE, writer and lecturer on European affairs, has just sailed for one of his annual tours of Central Europe.

HANS R. L. COHRSSEN, a German business man at present in this country, has been for years a student of European fiscal affairs.

J. A. HOBSON is a distinguished British economist whose numerous books and articles have given him world-wide standing in this field.

NEWTON ARVIN is an associate professor of English at Smith College. He is working on a book about Walt Whitman.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN, who made the daily book review of The New York Times a highlight of the paper during the years he wrote it, is now an editor of Fortune.

ALFRED KAZIN has written book reviews for The New Republic, The Herald Tribune Books, Scribner's and The New York Times Book Review.

HARRY THORNTON MOORE is leaving soon for England to do research for a book.

HAROLD WARD has written numerous articles in the field of science and technology for The New Republic and other magazines.

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